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FONDO DORIA

MICHAELO AND THE TWINS:

A TALE

OF THE

LAZZARONI IN NAPLES.

By Amalie Winter.

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TINTED ENGRAVINGS.

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BATH: BINNS AND GOODWIN.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE little work here presented to the reader contains a faithful picture of scenes and events that in Italy are of almost daily occurrence. Perhaps the only exception is to be found in the conduct of the Lazzaroni—the heroes of the tale. It is so seldom that one of this class ever emerges from his slothful obscurity, that Michaelo and his Twins stand out as a bright and rare example.

The habits of these people, their occupations, and amusements generally, are correctly portrayed, and the incidents of the Lazzaroni's travels, are just such as are usually encountered by those in similar circumstances.

The young reader will find, in the course of these pages, many descriptions of customs, and practices, and superstitions, which, to us, in this happy land, seem strange and ridiculous;—in truth, they are so: and the writer has endeavoured upon every occasion to point out their absurdity, and their contrast to God's Holy Word.

Let me entreat my young friends, however, whilst they make all due allowance for the ignorance of those whose lot is cast in these benighted lands, to judge of these things for themselves by the Bible, and diligently improve the privileges and

advantages which God has so graciously given them in happy England.

That the book may be a source of interest and instruction, is the earnest wish of the author.

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# THE YOUNG LAZZARONI.

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## Chapter First.

WE are told of a city so beautiful, that an old proverb assures us, "The man who has seen it may die contented." Naples is the name of this city; and, as most of my young readers are aware, it is situated in Italy.

Innumerable towers, domes, and cupolas, rise over palaces surrounded with terraces,



and the most delightful gardens and shrubberies. The glorious Bay of Naples reflects these beauties in its clear waters. To the left, or inland, may be seen a chain of mountains terminating in the far-famed volcano, Vesuvius, which is continually sending forth clouds of smoke. Whilst to the right, or seawards, is a crescent of small islands, which appears to form the boundary of the water.

Naples, being situated in the south of Italy, enjoys a lovely climate and a rich vegetation. There you may see groves of orange trees laden with their golden fruit, and perfuming the whole air with their fragrant blossoms. The graceful tendrils of the vine form hanging arches, as they twine from one tree to another, so as almost to give

a stranger the idea, that the most tasteful preparations have been made for some great festivity. Even the date palm—the tree that of all others rejoices in the most sunny and southern situations—here flourishes luxuriantly. Like a gigantic fern, it rushes up, sending forth at intervals its long, slender, feathered leaves, on all sides of the stem. But up to a certain height, it is customary to break them off, in order to increase the strength of the tree, and render it more fruitful. Little articles, formed of the triangular stalks of these leaves, are continually hawked about the streets of the city. The dates hang in thick golden clusters between the leafy coronets. They are about the size of a small plum, and, like the plum, they contain

a sort of stone or kernel. Then again may be seen the bread-fruit tree, which produces pods of a reddish-brown colour. The tradition is, that St. John the Baptist was nourished by the fruit of this tree in the wilderness. At Naples it serves as food for the asses and their drivers.

Farther on are, the dark and melancholy cyprus, the olive tree, and whole forests of oaks with their indented leaves and dwarfish acorns. The chesnut tree attains a gigantic size. The pomegranate furnishes the Italians with a most refreshing fruit, juicy as the water-melon. The strawberry tree <sup>!!!</sup> adorns the gardens with its beautiful fruit; but it is not particularly delicious, nor is it well to eat much of it. In addition to all the well-known

forest and fruit trees, this lovely place is enriched with the pepper, mastick, liquorice, and elder trees. The caper tree attains the height of some feet, and grows on walls and rocks.

But the fig tree is the most productive of them all. There are figs of all sizes and colours; and they are so cheap, that the poorest person can enjoy them both fresh and dried.

Perhaps the greatest charm in Naples is its climate. It is said to be easier to bear sorrow there, than in any other place, because everything around combines to make you forget it. A cloud is seldom seen to dim the brightness of the clear blue sky, that arches over this delicious country. The meadows are clothed with perpetual verdure. The bitter cold of

winter is unknown; and you are constantly surrounded by a cheerful people, who have but few wants and few wishes. The invariable mildness, and even warmth, of the climate, renders much clothing superfluous. Fuel, so necessary an article in colder climates, is there but little needed; and even hunger and destitution—those dreadful scourges of the north—are here scarcely heard of. The heat of the weather, the little pay, and the inactivity of the people, render spirituous liquors and animal food almost needless. Even a roof can hardly be called necessary, and in passing through Naples on a moonlight night, numerous sleepers may be seen in the colonades and porches of the churches and palaces, who, wrapped in their cloaks,

slumber as sweetly upon the hard stones, as if they were pillowed on down.

There are about forty thousand men in Naples, whose sole riches are an old cloak and a pair of wide trowsers of grey linen. Their happiness consists in doing nothing. A large portion of their time is spent in lying upon the quay; or stretching themselves in the hot sun, in the most exposed places. Their principal virtue (if that may be called a virtue which is, in a great measure, the result of their idleness) is their moderation and abstemiousness. A small quantity of maccaroni, which they can purchase ready cooked for a trifle, satisfies them for food. As soon as they have gained a coin sufficient to provide them with this meal, nothing will

induce them to make any further exertion. These people are called Lazzaroni.

The Lazzaroni have a great variety of ways and means of earning the small sum requisite for their daily food. Most of them beg ; others perform easy labour ; whilst others serve as guides to travellers, or carry their luggage. It is a rare thing indeed for a man to rise from this class, and achieve a better condition for himself. Such an event, however, has occurred ; as the following narrative will show.

Many years ago, it happened, that one of these Lazzaroni possessed a surprising talent for the zufalino, a kind of flageolet. He had taught himself ; and with wonderful accuracy he imitated, upon his imperfect instrument,

the songs of different kinds of birds. This talent was at once his amusement, and his daily occupation. Towards evening he would stroll along the beautiful Chiaja, and continue playing, till he had gained sufficient money to procure his maccaroni for the following day. Then he would retire to rest under the portico of a church, or the arch of a bridge; and before he slept, he would play for his own amusement his most beautiful melodies. This was again his occupation in the morning, and throughout the day; till the time arrived when he was in the habit of exercising his art, for profit, before the promenades of the Chiaja.

The Chiaja, or the Riviera de Chiaja, is the most magnificent street in Naples. It



is lined with palace after palace, all of which have beautiful balconies before the windows, and richly decorated porticoes before the doors. The street is paved with lava, and is so wide that many carriages can drive abreast. Between the Chiaja and the bay, are situated the public gardens, called the Villa Reale; and these are accessible to all comers at any hour. They are beautifully varied with lawns, shrubberies, flower-beds, avenues, statues, and fountains. The prettiest part of the villa is a circular space projecting into the sea, called Belvedere. This is furnished with marble seats, and here a number of merry boys and fishermen spend the greatest part of the day. A quay fronts the spot, and seems to have been specially

formed for their convenience. There also Michaelo, the Lazzaroni, might frequently be seen with his zufalino, when his object was to earn a little money. And often in the clear nights he lay here, by the sea-shore, gazing dreamily at the white temples and marble statues of the city, as they shone in the bright moonlight. No sound, but the gentle murmuring of the waves, interrupted the solemn stillness that reigned around. As the waters broke upon the shore, they sparkled with phosphoric light; whilst, as the moon fell upon the dark blue surface in the distance, it gleamed like polished steel. The bay was, at such times, enlivened by the fishermen's boats, as with glimmering torches they glided along the shore. Michaelo rejoiced

in such scenes. He could appreciate their silent beauty; and they formed a pleasing variety in his monotonous existence.

His wife, Marie, had, as a girl, led a similar life, that is to say, as calm and devoid of occupation, though perhaps not quite so musical. She had sold chesnuts, at the corner of the Chiaja, for an old woman, who in return gave the young girl her cast-off clothes, and as many chesnuts as she could eat. This was quite sufficient to satisfy Marie. She led what she considered a most enviable life. There was no occasion for her to run about after amusement as other girls did, for the Chiaja was the most lively street in all Naples.

One of Marie's favourite amusements was

to watch the splendid carriages as they rolled past, filled with ladies in rich attire. At the evening hour, too, the ice-shops were grandly illuminated, and numerous booths, lighted up with various-coloured lamps, were always well filled with customers, for in Naples every one is thirsty after the heat of the day.

The macaroni shops also were at this hour beautifully decorated, and well attended by hungry folks, eager to partake of the simple dainty. Macaroni is the favourite food of the Lazzaroni, and they have a peculiar mode of eating it. The head is thrown back—they hold a long string of it aloft—and suffer it to slip gradually down their hungry throats.

At intervals the sweet notes of a guitar might be heard. Then a merry laugh. This life in the Chiaja was indeed a joyous one, and one that many would be inclined to envy Marie.

But the greatest treat she had in the Chiaja, was listening to Michaelo's *zufalino*. When he lay down near her little stall, and imitated the songs of the birds, she could almost imagine that the shades of the forest were above her; and that she was sitting on the green turf, listening to the feathered songsters flying around.

Marie at length became Michaelo's wife. There was, however, even then but little change in their manner of living. They needed neither house nor costly furniture.

Neither pin-money nor cooking utensils. They took their meals on the Chiaja. The colonade was their sleeping apartment, and the blue sky their roof.

The old shopwoman whom Marie had served so long, had always been very much pleased with her assistant, because of her regularity and honesty; and as the time drew near when she looked for the birth of her first baby, the kind old lady offered her a small room in her house. Michaelo now, for the first time in his life, knew what it was to live within doors; for he loved his Marie too well, not to watch and attend her most carefully. Still, he felt very thankful that he was not condemned always to live in a room.

Marie gave birth to twins. Both were

boys, and unusually small and delicate ; but so pretty, that the neighbours all came to admire. Most of the visitors were of opinion that they were too delicate to live. But still there were many presents of various-coloured linen given to the mother ; and soon, according to the Neapolitan custom, the little ones were so wrapped in swaddling clothes from head to foot, that they looked like a couple of little mummies. The pretty bambinos (so babies are called in Italy) were general favourites.

Marie was greatly delighted with her darlings, and Michaelo said that he could not have supposed it possible for him to love such little things so much. But the loving mother did not long enjoy her new pleasure. The

children were scarcely a year old, before she was attacked by a violent fever, and died.

For the first time in his life Michaelo knew what it was to be unhappy. With sorrow in his heart, and tears in his eyes, he was compelled to play merry tunes on his *zufalino* ; and to mingle with the animated, careless crowds in the Chiaja. The few coins that he gained in this way, were barely sufficient to procure food for himself and his children. How then could he have paid for house-rent, and attendance as well ?

But even had he possessed the means, he could hardly have made up his mind to shut himself up, with his children, in a close room. Yet he could not bear the thought of being separated from them. He loved them very



tenderly ; and Marie, too, had expressly commended them to his care on her death-bed. After many deliberations, therefore, he at length determined to have two large strong pockets made to his cloak, in which the tiny babies might find a resting-place. In this way he thought he could go where he pleased, and always carry his treasures with him.

Again he slept under the colonades with his little charge. The cloak served them at once as mattress and coverlid. His own limbs were their pillows. When he ate maccaroni he gave the children one of the longest pieces between them ; and they would eat away at the same time till their little mouths met in the middle, and a contest began as to who should have the last bite. This sight amused



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The Twine eating messaroni

the bystanders so much, that they would bring the longest piece they could find, that the scene might be acted over again. The consequence was that the children's food cost the poor father scarcely anything. He had only to place himself near one of the maccaroni stalls, and plenty of persons were found who, for the sake of seeing the twins take a meal, would furnish them plentifully with it. Then Michaelo placed one on each of his shoulders, whilst he sat on the ground, with his plate between his knees. His hat served as a table for the little ones.

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## Chapter Second.

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MICHAELO's favourite resting-place was the porch of the Church of St. Januarius, for this was the name not only of the Patron Saint of the city of Naples, but also of his own.

St. Januarius was formerly a bishop of some note, who suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Diocletian. With many other holy men, he had been thrown to the wild beasts, and the story went, that he inspired them with such fear, that they did not venture to

attack him. This fact, however, did not save his life, for his enemies executed him ; but he died in so devoted and holy a manner, that the Roman Centurion, with five thousand of the idolaters, were convinced of the truth of the doctrines he maintained, and became Christians. A woman saved some of the martyr's blood, and it is said, that on every anniversary of his birth, this miraculous blood returns to its liquid state.

Many miracles are also related of the bones of this personage. On one occasion, they are said to have stopped the progress of a raging pestilence in Naples ; and since that time, they have been honoured with a resting-place under the High Altar of the

Subterranean Church, beneath the Cathedral. His head, with the bottle containing the blood, are still preserved in the treasure chamber.

A miracle is even related of his marble statue. The Sarazens, not having much respect for his memory, cut the nose off the said statue ; after which, they attempted to carry it away with them. When, however, they found that a violent storm arose, and prevented them from prosecuting their voyage, they threw the nose into the sea ; and, wonderful to relate, it instantly became calm. In the mean time, the Neapolitans, distressed at the mutilation of their Patron Saint, ordered one of their first artists to make a new nose ; but no nose would adhere

to the face. The experiment was repeatedly tried, but without success, until, at length, the fishermen noticed that a stone of a singular form was continually found in their nets, though they had frequently thrown it into the sea again. This proved to be the lost nose, and no sooner was it tried on the face of the statue, than it adhered of its own accord.

There is also pointed out under the ear of this statue, the scar of a plague spot, which appeared in the marble in 1656; the very year in which it was supposed to have protected the country from the further ravages of the plague.

Michaelo, who was a zealous Roman Catholic, was devoted to his Patron Saint.

He was unwearied in offering petitions to him ; believed implicitly in all his miracles ; and kept as much in his neighbourhood as possible, in order that he and the twins might be under his protection.

The poor man had never been taught the beautiful but simple truth, with which even little children in England are familiar, that Jesus Christ is the sinner's only Friend ; and that He, without the aid of saints or angels, is an ever-present, an all-sufficient, Saviour and Protector.

Among the companions of the two children, were two little girls, who shared in most of their innocent amusements. Beata and Anna were only a few years older ; they belonged to the Lazzaroni, and had



little more than rags to cover them ; and they found a life so full of privations harder to bear than the little boys did, who were provided with such comfortable nests in the pockets of their father's cloak. The little girls had passed the first years of their childhood in a pretty cottage, until they were deprived of it by a fearful occurrence :—

Their father had for many years served as a guide to visitors, and by that means had accumulated a small sum, which he laid out in the purchase of a cottage at the foot of Vesuvius. He had also procured an ass, upon which strangers could ride who wished to ascend the mountain ; and for this he always got well paid.

The garden adjoining his cottage, which he had laid out himself, was full of fine fruits and vegetables,—water melons of the sweetest kind, and beautiful figs.

My readers doubtless are aware that Vesuvius is a volcano. The exceeding warmth of the ground at its foot makes it doubly productive ; and it richly repays the slightest care of the cultivator. This family became more prosperous every day ; both the mother and the children had comfortable clothing ; and they received many presents from the travellers.

The children often remained alone at home when their father and mother were out ; but in that case, a large Newfoundland dog was with them, and guarded the house.

It was named Cora, and was a very sagacious creature. It would go to the baker's in the city, and bring back the provisions for the family in a basket which it carried in its mouth. Sometimes they would harness it to a small cart; and the willing animal would thus carry heavy burdens up the mountain. It played with the children in a variety of ways, and suffered them to do what they pleased with it. Often, when Beata attempted to carry little Anna, who was still in swaddling clothes, into the open air, Cora would come to her help, and take the baby from her, laying hold of the front of the wrappers quite gently, and carry her in such a position that her little hands could play with the face and ears of her black nurse.

One day, when their father and mother had left them to ascend Vesuvius with some strangers, the children were, as usual, quite alone. Anna was asleep upon a bed of rushes, and Beata was playing with the dog, when suddenly Cora sprang up, and pricked her ears, while she snuffed about in the air, wagged her tail, and moaned as if distressed. Almost at the same moment, Beata heard a distant thundering ; the room became dark, as if evening were approaching, and the ground began to tremble under her. A violent gust of wind opened both the doors and windows ; and a terrified bird flew into the house, and fluttered about the room. The noise awoke little Anna, who cried out with fear. Now, a terrible clap of thunder

came as it were from the heart of the mountain, which appeared to be answered by a thousand echoes, for it trembled and crackled long, without any cessation.

The faithful Cora sprang upon the bed of rushes, seized hold of little Anna, and after looking very knowingly at Beata, ran towards the door, which stood open, just as the earthquake and the storm had left it.

“Cora !” shrieked Beata, “lie down ! lie down ! A storm is coming ; we must stay in-doors. Mother told me so.”

But Cora only hastened more quickly, and Beata ran after her to take the child away from her ; the nearer, however, that Beata approached, the more swiftly ran the dog ; and she took quite an unusual direction,

which led to the top of a hill where Beata had never been before.

Cora laid little Anna down as soon as she had reached this spot, for she felt her weight very heavy. She had never carried the child so far before, and the poor animal was quite out of breath. Beata next arrived, no less heated and wearied ; and immediately commenced scolding poor Cora, who had lain down, with her tongue hanging out of her mouth.

“How can I,” thought Beata, “get baby home again if the storm comes? Naughty dog, you shall have a good beating ;” and she struck the poor dog. Had she used a stick, she might have hurt it ; but as it was, her tiny arms scarce made any impression on its thick coat.

The darkness now very much increased. "Oh dear!" wept Beata, "what shall I do? The black clouds frighten me so." And she sat down on the ground, and cradled her little sister in her lap.

It was not clouds, but smoke from Vesuvius, which was about to vomit fire, and continued thundering. A column of ashes, sometimes brown, sometimes deep black, whirled and smoked from its summit; by fits and starts, a pillar of fire shot up, accompanied by red-hot stones, part of which fell back again into the crater with a terrific noise. The others rolled down the mountain on all sides, so that the ground was quite strewn with them. The flames rose still higher, and raged with greater fury than ever; huge pieces of rock

seemed to be loosened, and were hurled to an immense distance. There was a fearful rumbling and growling, and the summit of the mountain was concealed by a dense smoke, over which a lurid glare was cast by the flames.

Beata at length discerned a fiery stream rushing down the mountain, destroying all that was in its path, and setting everything on fire that was combustible. This was the glowing lava, which all burning mountains send forth at the time of an eruption. Beata saw with horror that it went in the direction of her father's cottage ; its progress was slow, but still no human means could stop it. The cistern in front of the house restrained it for a short time ; the water hissed and steamed



when the hot stuff fell in ; but when the cistern was full, again it rushed along, streaming in at all the doors and windows of the cottage until the whole was consumed.

Beata wept violently. She called upon her father and mother, but no one answered ; little Anna complained of hunger ; Beata plucked some figs for her, and ate some herself.

Poor Cora put her tail between her legs, and moaned, looking very unhappy ; it was evident she was far from glorying in the wise action she had performed. Her sagacity had been the means of saving the lives of both the children. She had met with a sad return, for she had been scolded, and beaten by her

little mistress, and she was now filled with terror at the phenomenon she was witnessing. Even when the children fell asleep, wearied out with crying, she did not sleep ; but moaned, and howled at the mountain, which stood before her like a huge giant, and vomited fire throughout the whole night. The tumult of the storm continued ; the mountain did not cease its murderous play ; and the glare of the heavens became each moment more fearful.

Flashes of lightning darted across the sky ; fireballs, the size of men's heads, flew in all directions ; round red-hot stones and fragments of lava fell close by the sleeping children, and gradually cooled. At every occurrence of the kind Cora uttered fresh

howls, but she did not forsake the children, who slept soundly till morning.

When Beata opened her eyes, she looked round her with bewilderment. She could not imagine where she was, and thought she must have dreamed of the horrors she had witnessed. She could not understand how in one night poverty had come upon them. Taking her sister in her arms, she endeavoured to go towards the cottage, or rather, to the spot where it had stood ; there she thought she should find her parents, but the lava was hot, and burned her feet when she attempted to go. Could Cora have spoken, she would certainly have dissuaded her from making the attempt, for Cora's instinct was greater than Beata's wisdom, and she carefully

avoided touching the hot substances around her.

A number of people now passed, some urged on by curiosity and a love of sight-seeing ; others, who had, like the children, been deprived of all their possessions in the night, and were compelled to seek another home. Some were laden with the few articles they had managed to save ; most of the mothers, however, had snatched up their children, and carried nothing else. Many showed plainly enough how difficult it is for a man to have his wits about him when he is placed in such circumstances. They had laid hold of the least valuable and most useless things, and now were lamenting over their folly. Amongst others, a young girl grasped

a withered crown as firmly in her hands as if it had been formed of gold and precious stones. One woman had taken nothing but her spindle, and a man the little image of his patron saint.

“A pretty saint you’ve got there,” said one of the Lazzaroni to him. “If he had been worth anything, he would at any rate have prevented the destruction of your house.”

“True enough,” answered the man, in a low voice; and so saying, he threw the faithless wooden saint into the burning lava.

Many were the sorrowful tales the people related. Mothers missed their children, husbands their wives; one called for his

aged parent ; everybody had some reason to mourn.

On reaching the village of Giovanello, the stream of lava had divided in such a way as to leave one house untouched. For some time, the inhabitants stood upon the roof, long after every one around them had fled. Suddenly, however, to their horror, they noticed that at a little distance from their house, the arms of lava again drew near to each other, and threatened to unite. They rushed out hastily to save themselves ; and then, for the first time, it occurred to the anguished mother that their eldest child, a little girl of five years of age, was left behind. In their anxiety for the younger children, they had not thought of poor

Marie. The mother, almost frantic, tried to return, but she was held back.

“It is useless,” said her husband. “You would only rush to certain death yourself, without being able to save the child.

She struggled to escape from the strong arm that detained her, and shrieked out in despair, “Marie ! my darling Marie ! ”

The child came out on hearing her name. There was still a chance that she might be saved, but she tried to prevail on her pet lamb to accompany her ; this delayed her for a moment—the fiery ring closed—and Marie was lost.

The poor woman was almost raving when she saw what had happened ; and the

bystanders could scarcely keep her from rushing through the burning stream. At length they succeeded in dissuading her, by saying that it might possibly cool quickly, so as to allow them to pass over it.

The weeping child stood opposite her mother. She stretched out her little arms towards her ; then, weeping bitterly, she went back into the house. Hardly had she disappeared, when the lava extended over the whole spot.

A young man was employed in saving his mother, his brothers, and sisters ; he had confided the care of his aged father to a friend ; but the latter, finding his own flight was impeded by the old man, and that the lava was almost at his heel, set down his



burden, and sought safety for himself. The son heard the despairing cries of his parent; **and**, on turning round, he saw that he had sunk upon the ground, overcome by terror and weakness.

He ran back to him, took him on his shoulders, and would have hastened to the spot where he had left the others, but the rushing stream of lava was too quick for him.

"They are lost!" called out those who were looking on.

"We are lost," repeated the youth. "Kneel down, father, let us die praying," he added, and both knelt and prayed. But as if by a miracle, the stream separated, and the dutiful boy, with his father, were saved.

Among the anxious spectators of the scene were many who knew Anna and Beata ; they took the children with them to Naples, hoping that they might there find their father and mother. But neither their parents, nor the travellers whom they had accompanied, were there. They had doubtless perished in the terrible conflagration. The ass had been carried away by the hot lava ; and very soon it was ascertained that a stone had caused the death of the father of the children. Their mother, who, in spite of the stream of lava, had hastened towards their cottage to save the children, had rushed into danger from which she could not extricate herself.

Thus the children were orphans, and grew

up among the Lazzaroni, without other love than that of the faithful Cora, who watched little Anna like a kind nurse, and played with Beata. They had lost all. The cottage was burnt, the pretty garden destroyed, and the ass dead.

The Lazzaroni shared their maccaroni with them, and the dog sought nourishment in the city. Both the children and the dog seemed now peculiarly the property of Naples. The twin children of the Lazzaroni, Michaelo, were always their playmates, when their father, having finished his day's work, came to rest in the colonade of the church of St. Januarius.

One of the boys would often ride on the patient Cora's back, while the other would

enact the part of a horse for little Anna, and Beata walked carefully by her side. This they called a cavalcade.

Vesuvius still smoked, but the children did not fear the smoke, as they had at length become accustomed to it. But when it thundered and rumbled, then they were full of alarm, and would kneel down with the other Lazzaroni, and implore the saint to conquer the evil spirit in the heart of the mountain, so that it might not harm them any more. For they thought it must be an evil spirit, perhaps even the arch-fiend himself, who dwelt there.

My little readers may be inclined to smile at such an opinion being entertained, even by children. Alas! they little know how

great is the ignorance and blindness even of grown up people, in Popish countries.

Where God is not honoured—where Christ is not loved—where His day is profaned—and His Word unread and unknown, we must not be surprised at finding the grossest superstitions, and the most lying legends, implicitly believed.

How thankful should we be that our lot is cast in happy Protestant England, where the light of truth shines so brightly, that the foolish tales and traditions which in Italy are universally received, cannot stand the light, and are, therefore, unanimously rejected.

I would beg my young readers, as they proceed in this narrative, to pause some-

times, and thankfully compare their own favoured circumstances with the lot of the Lazzaroni children.

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### Chapter Third.

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FIRST impressions are generally the most powerful. The Lazzaroni's life was now completely occupied by his care for his children, and his music. The little ones slept, played, and moved to the sound of the zufalino. When they began to understand that the sweet sounds they heard came from the simple instrument, they attempted to produce the same with their feeble fingers.

Their father seeing this, procured two tiny zufalinos for them ; and amused himself by teaching them how to play. They soon learned to produce sounds, but it required great patience on both sides.

The children were scarcely three years old, when they had learned several airs, and they used to perform singular little concerts with their father. This proved a lucrative employment ; for the people who had been so delighted to see the twins swallowing the maccaroni, now flocked with double eagerness to listen to the sweet sounds produced by the young performers and their father.

The Lazzaroni, Michaelo, regularly now took his station in the evening on the Molo,





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The twins in their father's pockets, playing the zulufo.

which was a customary resort of the Neapolitans, as, at that hour, especially, they all were in want of amusement. There numerous groups were formed. Some collected round an Improvisatore, as he was called ; a man in poor clothing, who repeated poetry with animated gestures and sparkling eyes, and managed to excite the admiration and interest of the circle that surrounded him. The most pathetic parts were always received with loud applause, and a number of small coins rewarded the orator.

The lower classes of Neapolitans are to be found on the Molo. There, like a parcel of children just released from school, they throng round the different persons who afford them amusement.

Not far from the improvisatore, was a guitar-player, supplying his deficiency of skill by his curious gestures. A monk stood on a chair, exhorting the bystanders to take advantage of that opportunity to possess themselves of sundry relics, which, he told them, were gifted with miraculous powers; but, in spite of his eloquence, he found but few purchasers, for just opposite, appeared a Punchinello in a puppet-show, which gradually succeeded in enticing away most of his auditors, although the monk did not cease fiercely to denounce the puppet heroes and their admirers.

The puppet-show, however, was too inviting to be resisted. Upon the curtain was painted Olympus with the gods. It was

true, Venus had a swollen cheek ; Juno looked rather like a stout Neapolitan fish-woman ; and Jupiter was such an exact portrait of a copper-smith, that whom he really was intended for, could only be guessed at by his eagle.

Michaelo had placed himself, with his boys, in the close vicinity of this gorgeous object, in order to give the usual concert, but the twins were so eager to see the first puppet-show, that he could not prevail on them to perform their parts.

The commencement of the entertainment consisted of a tragedy in which Punchinello (or Punch, as he would be called in England) acted a prominent part. This division of the performance, however, did not prove

so attractive to the younger portion of the audience, as the comic scene which followed.

After the tragical death of the hero, a huge barrel was brought on to the stage, out of which leaped a multitude of Punchinellos, tall and short, stout and thin, red, white, and variegated, who commenced dancing most vigorously, whilst their numbers appeared to increase every moment. As a finale, a surpassingly tall and thick Punchinello made his appearance, seated himself on the ground, and, with his outstretched legs, collected his little brethren together, until they were all united in one mass.

When the little Lazzaroni had feasted their eyes with these wonders, they found to their delight a wandering Punchinello

preparing to perform in the street. These are very common in Naples at every hour of the day, and are similar to those seen in our own streets. The performer, who makes Punchinello speak, has a piece of metal in his mouth, by means of which he can elevate his voice to a squeak.

In order that the children might see better, Michaelo suffered them to station themselves on his shoulders. Their delight was very great, when they found that a small dog was on the stage as well as the puppets, only he was but half visible. The dog appeared to find no great pleasure in acting the part of a comic hero, for he yawned constantly at the spectators. Punchinello approached him with great caution,

spoke to him, and when the dog, at first, took no notice of him, he addressed him more vehemently, and, at length, succeeded in making him bark and show his teeth. As this had not the effect of releasing him from his tormentor, he bit Punchinello so sharply in his arm and leg, that he uttered loud cries.

The master of the dog now comes forward, desires the animal to leave him, and seeks to pacify the wounded hero. Having accomplished this, he offers to lay a wager with Punchinello for eight measures of wine, that the dog will not bite him now, however he may tease him. Punchinello agrees, whereupon the master whispers into the animal's ear—

“ Quiet, my man, and I shall get eight

measures of wine, and you shall have a sausage."

At the word sausage, the dog wags his tail and appears highly delighted.

Punchinello draws near, at first, with great fear, but becomes bolder on finding how quiet the dog is; goes close up to him, touches him with his fingers, pats him, pushes him, and strikes him as hard as he can with his fist. It is in vain; the dog neither stirs nor utters a sound.

At length the master cries out, "Hold," and declares he has gained his wager, but he offers to renew it on opposite terms. Punchinello accepts this bet likewise. The master whispers to the dog—

"Bite him, my man, and then I shall



win eight measures of wine, and you another sausage."

And hardly has Punchinello touched the animal, before he rushes upon him, shakes him by his large red nose, and snaps and bites him till called off by his master.

Punchinello has now to pay for sixteen measures of wine. He maintains that neither his purse nor his honour will allow him to do this ; that he has been conquered by witchcraft ; a rogue of a dog has shamefully ill-treated an honourable man ; and the whole matter ends in Punchinello offering to decide the quarrel by sword, pistol, or cannon. The creditor is compelled to fight ; and Punchinello, having pierced him

through and through, comes off with flying colours.

When the numerous spectators had dispersed, the little Lazzaroni crept back into their father's pockets, and he took his station at a convenient spot near, drew out his zufalino, and began imitating the song of a bird. It seemed, at the same time, as if other birds were answering him.

"Where can those sounds come from?" asked the bystanders, looking in all directions ; even Punchinello stood still, and the dog pricked his ears and wagged his tail. At length one of the twins, with his zufalino, crept from Michaelo's pocket on to his shoulder, and produced the same sweet sounds. Soon, another little fellow made

his appearance, and occupied the other shoulder. There they sat, as firm as the branches of a tree, their father remaining perfectly undisturbed, so accustomed was he to his burden. They warbled and piped, they quavered and sang. Sometimes the three joined in one of the national airs, and the birds appeared to warble at intervals ;— the merry tarantella was interrupted, or accompanied, by the sweet song of the nightingale.

The number of spectators soon increased, so eager were they to witness this singular performance, and to listen to these wonderful sounds. When Michaelo held his cap, quite a shower of coins fell in ; and though they were of the smallest kind, yet the sum

amounted to twenty times as much as he needed to enable him to lie in the sun, to eat macaroni, and play the zufalino.

Michaelo now began to feel a little vanity. He was pleased to find people spoke of him and were so delighted to hear and see him. He bought new clothes for himself and the children, though he still kept to the costume of the Lazzaroni. His shirts were fine and white; his mantle neither torn nor stained; his trowsers whole and clean. But the finishing point was the red cap, which every one wore, and which is the distinguishing characteristic of the Lazzaroni. His children's caps were made to hang, the one over the right, the other over the left ear; but his own was placed upon the middle

of his head, surmounting his fine black hair.

He now performed daily in the different streets, in the squares, and promenades. He was often summoned by travellers, and even by some of the Italian nobles ; and then he received pieces of gold for his pay ; a thing he had never dreamed of before. With the increase of money, came a desire to lay by ; not that Michaelo became a miser, but he loved his children very tenderly, and he was anxious to leave them a better inheritance than he had received from his father. This desire became at last so powerful, that he determined to leave his native city, and to travel in other countries with his little family.

It was not a mere grasping after gain that induced him to resolve upon taking this step. He felt that it was dangerous for his children to remain in Naples as they grew up ; for Michaelo's companions were not among the most honourable of men. All his friends were obliged to earn their daily food, and they were not particularly scrupulous as to the way in which they did it. Some sang the tarantella ; others danced ; but many were quite disinclined for such exertion, and chose simply to beg, being perfectly satisfied with their gains, however small.

Many of them were too idle even to ask for what they wanted, and therefore endeavoured, by their appearance, to excite the

charitable feelings of the passers by. They pretended to be blind, lame, or ill ; and many who really were ill, endeavoured to excite sympathy by describing their sufferings and ailments. In their opinion, it was far better to beg, than to live a regular life in the hospitals. One, a tall and powerful man, lay in the street, with one of his legs naked, and apparently very much injured, while he attracted attention by his loud cries of pain. A surgeon, passing by, offered to relieve him by dressing the wound ; but the man resolutely refused to profit by his kindness, as his injured leg was the means of providing him with food without his being obliged to labour.

Many of the Lazzaroni would be shivering

on the stones, with nothing but an old pair of trowsers to cover them ; but as soon as some compassionate spectator had thrown them the coin they needed, their shivering was at an end, and they went and dressed themselves.

A greyheaded and apparently infirm old man would be employed in dragging a bundle of wood along the street : if a stranger passed, he sank down, as if exhausted by his burden, closed his eyes, and appeared to breathe with much difficulty. Another excelled in imitating the most violent convulsions, and Michaelo had some acquaintances who did not pursue even such means as these, but were in the habit of cheating and stealing. Some would entice a stranger into .



a gondola, and then the party would rob him.

It could not be supposed that such people would be anxious about their children. They were all brought up to follow the same practices. The band of little beggars was innumerable. They covered themselves with dust; rolled over and over like wheels by the sides of carriages; beat their chins with their fists, and danced to the chattering of their teeth. Some howled, cried, squeaked, put their fingers into their mouths, or knocked their stomachs, in sign of hunger. They pretended to seize eagerly old cabbage-stalks, or orange-peelings, and if they succeeded in getting a meal of macaroni, they commenced the same game an hour afterwards.

Up to the present time, our two little Lazzaroni had learned none of these tricks. The watchful care of their father had kept them, as much as possible, out of bad company. If they did occasionally run about on the quay with a swarm of half-naked children, it was only when Michaelo was too much entranced by his sweet music to observe them. Sometimes they would offer the curious sea-horse, the star-fish, or some variegated shells for sale. And if a stranger passed, they would call out to him, as they threw off their little shirts, "*Buttate, Signor! buttate Eccellenza!*" (Throw, Sir! throw, noble Sir!)" and if they could prevail on him to throw a copper coin into the water, they would swim away, and dive like ducks ;

re-appearing quickly, with the money in their mouths.

In the mean time, however, a circumstance occurred, which made Michaelo determine upon carrying his intention into execution immediately. Pietro, the strongest of the twins, used to play mischievous tricks, and often displayed great quickness, which in some cases amounted to cunning. One day he had received a few coins, as a reward for returning to its owner a pocket-book which he had found. He felt a great desire to taste some figs. He had eaten maccaroni and melons until he was tired of them, but it was a very long time since he had tasted figs, as they were not just then very cheap or plentiful. At the corner of the street,

sat a little girl, who always had some to sell ; her stall looked that morning even more attractive than usual ; the baskets were full of white and green fruit, ornamented with fresh vine-leaves and flowers. In one basket were the dried or roasted figs, strung upon pieces of wood, in the form of rings, trees, and little men.

“How many will you let me have for two grani?”\* inquired Pietro of the girl.

“Two grani!” she returned ; surprised that a young Lazzaroni could bring so much money. “You may eat as much as you please for two grani.”

Pietro now set to with great eagerness ;

\* An Italian coin not quite the value of a halfpenny.

*Gran*, singular ; *Grani*, plural.

but when he was nearly satisfied, it occurred to him that he was acting a very selfish part, in not letting his brother taste of the delicacies his money had procured. He wished now he had bought a certain number, and divided them equally. While he was thus meditating, he looked round the corner, and saw Carlo playing close by. The stall-keeper happened, just at that moment, to be engaged in selling figs to another customer. Pietro seized the opportunity, and made his brother take his place. Carlo, nothing loath, began with energy to devour the delicious fruit ; and the surprise of the young stall-keeper changed into anger, as she saw the rapidity with which her figs disappeared. Still, she could not neglect her other customers ; and

Pietro, who, by this time, began to think he could manage to devour one or two more, and had observed that Carlo's appetite was satisfied, took his brother's place and began afresh.

The young girl now became quite enraged, and told him she hoped, with all her heart, that he might suffer for his greediness ; but she had evidently no idea of the trick that had been played upon her. Pietro, perfectly unmoved by what she said, calmly continued the feast, until the bystanders betrayed his secret. They were highly amused at his trick, and laughed heartily when they told Michaelo of the cunning his boys had displayed. He, however, did not laugh, but shook his head, and said to himself, "I see

there is no help for it; we must go away. We must leave our beautiful Naples."

And Michaelo was right, for as my little readers must have perceived, the trick played by Pietro and Carlo upon the fig vender was both unkind and wicked. Besides acting a deceitful part, they had broken the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you."

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### Chapter Fourth.

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THE boys cried bitterly when they found they were to go away. They had passed such a happy life with their numerous merry playmates. They were sure they should never see such beautiful paper kites anywhere, as in Naples; and there were so many of them; they might be seen in all directions, of all colours, and of all sizes, and could be purchased for so little money.



Very often, too, the respectable children would give their old ones to the little Lazzaroni.

The paper air-balloons were another great attraction. All the Neapolitans, young and old, rejoiced when they saw a parti-coloured ball hovering over their heads, now rising, now falling, sometimes large, then gradually decreasing in size.

Then they had so many games. One of their favourites was the following :—One of the party is called the wolf, the others are sheep. The wolf kneels down on all fours, and scratches the earth, while the sheep join hands, with their backs to him. The following conversation then passes between them, in a singing tone :—

*Sheep.* "Wolf, Wolf, what are you doing?"

*Wolf.* "I am making a little cupboard."

*Sheep.* "And what will you put in it when you have done."

*Wolf.* "Meat and maccaroni."

*Sheep.* "Well, suppose you try to get your meat now."

The sheep then keep moving backwards and forwards before him. He is not suffered to leave his place, but as they approach, he tries to lay hold of their heels; some manage to disengage their feet from his grasp, others nearly fall down. The first that he succeeds in detaining has to take his place, and he remains a looker-on, until he has gained so many assistants, that they can compel the remaining sheep to disunite. Now comes

the second part, which forms almost a distinct game. The two tallest boys form an arch, by raising and joining their hands; their companions form a long chain, by taking hold of each other's clothes, and the foremost of them is the wolf, now, however, called the falcon. The arch and the falcon converse in singing, and suddenly the latter rushes through, followed by his long chain, but just as the hindmost link is passing under the arch, the sides fall down, and separate him from his comrades; the train keeps passing through and through, losing one member each time, until the falcon only is left. He rushes through with all his might, and if he succeeds in passing ten times before he is captured, the

victory is his, and he is a "*Bravissimo falcone*."

It is not to be wondered at, that in Naples, adults have their games as well as the children, and especially the Lazzaroni, seeing they are such an idle set of men. Even greybeards will amuse themselves with games which, in other countries, are only played by boys. The game of *Boccio*, is one very frequent among them. Each player is furnished with a ball, which he is to throw at a smaller one, set up as a mark ; and his object is, either to place his own ball as near as possible to it, or to strike away that of his opponent.

The beautiful game of tennis is played to perfection in Italy, especially towards

the north of the peninsula. It was formerly an universal amusement in the courts, universities, and cities of all Europe. Leathern balls, the size of a man's head, and inflated with air, are struck by a piece of wood which the player carries in his hand. Those about to play divide themselves into two parties, and are separated from each other by a net, placed obliquely across the court. They are all attired in a light close-fitting dress, which displays their slender figures to great advantage ; and their movements, like those of all the Italians, are active and graceful.

The spectators, who are ranged behind nets, in lofty galleries on each side, take a lively interest in the game, and reward

every skilful stroke with shouts of applause. But very frequently, instead of the tennis court, the game is carried on quite as well in an enclosed space, by two or more players, who, having taken off their coats and girded themselves with coloured handkerchiefs, stand opposite to each other. The spectators sit on benches round ; and here, again, are heard enthusiastic cries of "*Bene !*" "*Bravo !*" "*Bravissimo !*" The tiniest hands are energetically clapped, and the most youthful voices shout "*Bravo.*"

But, full of charms as Naples was, the boys were to leave it !

Their parting with Beata and Anna was very sorrowful. The children could hardly speak for sobbing and weeping. The little

girls had good cause to do so, for since Michaelo had earned so much money, they had shared many a good meal with their young friends, and he had frequently made them presents of clothes.

But it was not the loss of these good things, so much as the fact that they really loved their little playmates. They were not so rough as the other Lazzaroni boys, for their love of music had subdued and softened them. And now they were to go away—a long way off—where no one could hear anything of them; for none of all the Neapolitan Lazzaroni could write, not even Michaelo himself. There was nothing to soften or lessen the pain of separation, and the poor children were so

unhappy at the thought of it, that nothing could cheer them.

Michaelo himself was far from happy, for the Neapolitans imagine that there is no place like Naples. To him, all the world besides seemed as dark and gloomy as the crater of Mount Vesuvius; and he supposed it produced scarcely anything but icicles.

“How can your father be so cruel as to take you away from here?” said Beata.

“Ah! if mother had been alive, he wouldn’t have done it,” sobbed Pietro.

“What will become of you when you get to the places where the sun never shines?” asked the little girl.



"Father knows best," returned the gentle Carlo, trying to restrain his tears. "He says we shall earn money, grow rich, and learn a great many things."

"What's the use of getting any more money?" asked Anna. "We have not half so much as you have; you are so very rich."

"Yes," added her sister. "And you can't want to learn anything,—nobody plays the zupalino so well as you do."

"You are right enough," returned Pietro, continuing to sob, "I only wish father thought so too."

"Hush!" said Carlo; "you know well how kind father always is to us, and that he is only doing what he thinks is

best for us. We ought not to be so cross about it."

One morning, soon after this conversation, the three Lazzaroni set off on their travels, walking as quickly as the children's little legs would carry them. At every village they came to, they stopped and played. When the twins were tired, their father carried them by turns. They could still creep into the pockets of his cloak to sleep, but he could no longer carry them in this fashion, as they were grown so much heavier, that they would have torn it. They always walked behind Michaelo, taking hold of his cloak, so as to be half drawn along. But as soon as they approached a village, or town, they managed to conceal

themselves, so that Michaelo alone could be seen.

He then took his stand in the market-place, or some other suitable spot, and commenced imitating the song of the birds, or he played a lively piece, such as the tarantella, in order to attract an audience. When a sufficient number were assembled, he played a more intricate piece, in which the children joined ; trios followed, which astonished the listeners so much, that they concluded it must be the work of enchantment—that Michaelo must have some unknown and supernatural power : until, at length, the little twins crept from their hiding-places, clambered on to their father's shoulders, and then unravelled the mystery,

by accompanying him with great skill. Everybody was delighted with the performance, and rewarded it generously.

As long as the Lazzaroni continued in Italy, all went well, for the weather was still very warm, and they were able frequently to pass the night in the open air, without suffering any inconvenience from being so slightly clad. But after passing the Alps, they found a great change. Happily, they had earned money sufficient to purchase thick boots, and warmer clothing, which they wore under their national costume. They could also afford to pay for comfortable lodgings at night, but it was anything but agreeable to them to be shut up for so many hours in a close room.

The farther they left Italy behind them, the more surprise and admiration they excited ; all considered it such an astonishing thing for any Lazzaroni to leave Naples. Some were touched by the warm affection that reigned between them — others marvelled at the skill displayed by the children, for they looked much younger than they really were.

Michaelo's gains surpassed his hopes ; and, having learnt economy in too severe a school soon to forget it, he carefully laid by all he could spare.

They now performed, not only in the open streets, but frequently in rooms hired expressly for the purpose ; and often took part in public concerts. They were no longer

compelled to trudge wearily on foot, for Michaelo could now allow himself and his children the comfort of a conveyance.

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## Chapter Fifth.

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MICHAELO'S first employment, on arriving at Paris, was to count over their gains ; and he was very much astonished when he found the amount of his riches. As he knew the danger of carrying such a sum about with him, he placed it in the hands of a banker, for remittance to Naples, where he had provided some one to take care of his money for his children.

At that time, there were two fairs in Paris; the one in winter, the other in summer. The latter was called St. Germain's fair; and thither the little Lazzaroni and their father turned their steps. Artists of all kinds were assembled here, to provide amusement for the curious multitude. Perhaps, on the whole, there was not quite so much merriment and variety as on the Molo in Naples, but there were many things the children had never seen before.

During their journey, they had met with a pianist from Troyes, named Jean Raisin, who was accompanied by four children. With these children as his sole assistants, he intended to give concerts. Notwithstanding his musical talents, the poor man had found



it a hard matter even to provide his family with bread, in his native place. He wished to give lessons, but there was no one in Troyes wealthy enough to pay for such an indulgence. He had therefore determined to make his own children proficient in the art. When the poor little things could scarcely move their fingers, he taught them to touch the strings of the harpsichord ; and, from constant practice, united with great natural ability, the young performers had, in a short time, attained such perfection as to astonish all who heard them.

The eldest of the children was eight years old, the youngest, Jean Baptiste, but four ; and his sister, Babette, two years older than he. The two youngest were most remark-

able for their skill ; and to this, their extreme simplicity added a very great charm. They loved each other very tenderly, and nothing afforded them so much delight as to give pleasure to each other.

Carlo and Pietro attached themselves very warmly to these two little ones, and they spent many hours in playing with them, while their fathers were abroad, making preparations for their respective performances. They had agreed to give their concerts in different places, so as not to interfere with each other. Raisin had hired a large public room, which was always well attended ; so that he took much more money than the Lazzaroni, who played in the streets, or in private houses, into which they

were sometimes beckoned. But while Pietro and Carlo always came home full of fun and life, poor little Jean Baptiste was brought back from the performance pale and exhausted ; and as the hour again drew near, he seemed to tremble at the thought of it.

“Why are you so afraid?” said Pietro, one day. “The people who listen can’t do you any harm ; besides, they always look so good and kind ; it is very plain they like to hear little children play.”

“Ah !” sighed little Raisin, “that is true enough ; but if you only knew—”

Here Babette stopped her brother’s communications, by a jog with her elbow.

“Hush !” said she, “father will be angry,” and the children separated.

At length, one day, Raisin with his four children, and Michaelo with his twins, were summoned to the court, that the royal party might be entertained by the juvenile performers. Neither Raisin nor Michaelo had ever been at court. The former had read many accounts of this wonderful place, in newspapers and books, but the Lazzaroni were still almost ignorant of its existence.

At first, the children thought that the company would be assembled in the open air, in gardens, or in the large space called a court. But when they were desired to ascend a flight of marble steps, which led into a conservatory, they were quite puzzled. To their delight, Pietro and Carlo recognized some of their favourite Neapolitan flowers ;

and the heart of the little exiles leaped for joy, as they once more inhaled the fragrant scent of the beautiful orange blossoms. But how great was their astonishment on entering the saloon. A chandelier, brilliant with all the colours of the rainbow, was suspended from the ceiling ; it was of crystal, and radiant with wax-lights. Beautiful pictures, in massive gilt frames, adorned the walls ; the curtains were of velvet and gold, and all the fastenings were gilded. The whole furniture of the apartments was equally rich and elegant. The arm-chairs were gilded and enamelled ; and even the legs of the tables were ornamented with carvings of lilies and wreaths of flowers.

Numerous servants in gold-laced liveries

were moving about the apartment, and the children naturally concluded, that gentlemen so richly attired, must be the king and the courtiers ; but they were most interested in some boys about their own age, who were just as richly dressed, and were called pages. These children, being at a loss to know what to do, employed themselves in playing tricks, running after each other, beckoning the attendants, and acting as if they were masters ; while they took care to show by their disdainful looks, what great contempt they felt for the strange children who were hired to play.

When all was arranged, the court entered. As the king came into the apartment, accompanied by the queen and her mother,

trumpets sounded, and all the courtiers inclined their heads. The ladies shone in gold and brilliants. The gentlemen wore the most beautiful uniforms, adorned with numerous orders, and shining stars. Two pages carried the train of the queen-mother; the others stood behind the chairs of those who were the most elevated in rank.

Pietro and Carlo, who had never before known what it was to be afraid, were, for the moment, completely overawed by the sight of all this splendour. But this feeling did not trouble them long; their courage returned very quickly. When they put their zupfalinis to their lips, they gave general satisfaction; and after the performance was over, they were called into the circle of nobles, some of

whom spoke Italian with them, and gave them sweetmeats.

Three harpsichords had been brought in for the family of the Raisins. At one, sat the father with his eldest daughter; at the second, Babette and her eldest brother, but no one was seated at the third.

“Where is Baptiste?” Pietro had inquired of Babette as soon as he missed his little friend. But her only answer was a shake of the head. Father Raisin, however, had heard the question, and replied that “Jean was not well.”

The music now commenced. First the father played a concerto with the children. They then raised their hands from the instrument—and, to the astonishment of all the



bystanders, the third harpsichord repeated the same piece with very beautiful variations, though no performer was visible.

At Raisin's request, several persons desired the harpsichord to perform certain pieces ; their orders were immediately executed, and that with exquisite taste. The court had often heard of this wonderful instrument, for the whole city was talking of it, but it surpassed all their expectations. It appeared possessed of the intelligence of a living being, and of the talent of a skilful artist—so much feeling was mingled with the execution, that it was evident to all that it could not be the effect of mere machinery. The astonishment was general, and expressions of surprise were heard on all sides ; the instrument was



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Examination of the Mysterious Harpist's Tomb.

minutely examined, but it was formed exactly like the others, except that it was rather deeper.

One after another the courtiers endeavoured to discover the secret of the mechanism ; at length they began to speak of witchcraft, and this was sufficient to alarm the queen-mother, for in those days they believed in such things.

The queen desired Raisin to approach, and questioned him about the mystery ; but he hesitated to unravel it, as it was so profitable to him. This only increased the queen's fear and curiosity ; and the king, perceiving it, ordered Raisin to open the harpsichord.

Raisin said he had forgotten the key ; but his confusion was so great, that all

present were convinced he was not speaking the truth. As the king was not accustomed to contradiction, he ordered that the instrument should be broken open ; and some of the attendants immediately hastened to procure the necessary implements.

This circumstance induced Raisin to bring out his key, and he unwillingly proceeded to open the instrument. He would rather reveal his long-cherished secret, than see the beautiful harpsichord destroyed ; so he turned the key and lifted the cover.

What was the astonishment of the whole court, when a pale, trembling, little boy appeared in the instrument ! It was Jean Baptiste, who (half dead with fear, for he had heard the conversation, and was nearly

stifled), was lifted out of the narrow case ; as his little feet touched the ground, he fainted away.

Water and vinegar were soon brought by the servants ; and when they had succeeded in reviving the poor child, the queen took him in her arms, and all the ladies overwhelmed him with caresses, playthings, and sweetmeats. When he was sufficiently recovered, he sat down to one of the harpsichords, and played some of the beautiful melodies he had previously performed in his musical prison-house.

The enchanted instrument was so constructed, that it had a set of notes inside as well as outside, and little Baptiste had learned to play lying on his face. This was

comparatively an easy task when he first commenced the practice, but since then he had grown considerably stouter and taller, and the instrument had not kept pace with him.

Little Jean Baptiste had so completely engrossed the attention of the court, that the Lazzaroni received no further notice, though, at first, all had been much attracted by them. This alteration was scarcely observed by the children, but Michaelo thought to himself, "It will never do to build upon the fortune of the moment, but we must make the best use of it while it lasts. One comfort is, they have not forgotten to pay us well."

So saying, he pocketed his shining Louis-

d'ors,\* and felt no envy when he saw that little Raisin received double the sum. He and his boys walked home on foot, and arrived at the same time with the carriage that had conveyed Monsieur Raisin and his musical family. While the twins sprang joyfully up the steps, poor little Jean Baptiste was obliged to be carried,—so thoroughly wearied was he.

“Monsieur Raisin,” said Michaelo, as he was sitting with the organist, in the evening, over a glass of wine, “you will soon become a rich man, if you go on in this way, but I fear you will pay dearly for your money. Little Baptiste’s life is in danger, depend upon it; you had much better give him a

\* A French coin, equal in value to a sovereign of our money.

rest from his labours, and let him go into the country for a time. I would have nothing more to do with the enchanted instrument. If that boy is well taught, and gets his health, he will earn his bread without any such suffering."

"You may be right," said Raisin, "and I intend, by and by, to do as you say. But I cannot throw away the good fortune that is come upon us just now. The boy will not die from the little labour and confinement he has to bear with now. A child comes round so quickly, and for his own good, and that of his brothers and sisters, he must continue it a little longer. Next year, I hope we shall all meet in the country."

In the mean time, Jean Baptiste had been



conveyed to bed; little Babette sat at his feet, and Carlo and Pietro were by his side, trying to amuse him, by playing with the pretty things he had brought from the palace. But the poor child seemed occupied by very different thoughts; he was silent for some time. At length, he took up a bright star, that was lying on the bed.

“See, Carlo,” said he, “what a pretty star this is; but it is not nearly so bright as those in the sky. Will you have it for your own, and then you will think of me when God has taken me into heaven, far above the bright stars; I hope I shall soon go there?”

“How can you talk so?” said Babette, “it is not good of you to say such things.”

"Ah, Babette!" returned the poor little boy, "you would say so too, if you knew what it was to lie for five or six hours every day in that narrow place. Oh! I am so afraid of it; it makes me feel so ill. And when I am tired, and my head aches, and I want to leave off, father says I must go on playing, because I shall get a great deal of money for you. I should like to do that, but I know it will make me die."

Then he took up another plaything and turning to Pietro, he added,—

"I should like you to keep this, Pietro, and then you will think of me when I am in my grave."

When he saw the children wept, he smiled.

"You should not cry," said he; "when I

am in heaven I shall play such beautiful music, and I shall never be tired. Oh, it will be so delightful !”

The children separated. The next day they heard little Jean Baptiste play again, and a concert for the evening was announced, when the enchanted instrument was to be the great attraction and so it continued for many days.

Michaelo and his children were now about to continue their travels. As they took leave of Raisin, he told them he should follow them ; but Michaelo resolved in his own mind, that for the future it would be better for them to be separate, as they could not avoid interfering with each other.

He again counted his treasure ; it amounted

to twice as much as he had already forwarded to Naples. Tears filled his eyes, as he thought of his lost Marie, and wished that she had been able to enjoy the fruit of their labours. Then he knelt down with his two boys, and in a few simple words expressed his gratitude for the success they had met with, saying, as they rose from their knees, "Thank God, my boys, you are healthy and strong ; your work is not doing you any harm. My poor pockets tell a tale of your increase of weight."

The next day they set off for London.

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## Chapter Sixth.

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MICHAELO was rather puzzled to know where to take up his quarters, when he reached the immense metropolis of England. Though he had now travelled through many different parts, the overgrown size of London bewildered him. At length, he was directed to a small lodging-house, which was frequented by wandering musicians of all kinds, tumblers, and exhibitors of puppet-shows.

The poor children, accustomed as they were to the clear Italian sky, did not half like the foggy atmosphere of London; but they were still more inconvenienced, when they found themselves shut up in their close, dark lodgings.

All the lodgers dined at one table, and late in the evening. In order to reach the room where the meal was provided, it was necessary to ascend a ladder, which was removed as soon as all the guests were assembled, in order to prevent the escape of any without paying.

The fare was very substantial, far more so than our young Neapolitans liked, for they would gladly have changed the under-done roast beef and potatoes, for a dish of their

favourite macaroni. Then the room became so oppressive, and the guests so noisy, that they were quite uncomfortable. They were surrounded by suspicious, evil-looking men, whose faces bore the marks of dissipation and crime.

All this afforded a striking contrast to poverty in Naples. Though clad in rags, the poor there are happy and cheerful, apparently rejoicing that they have no treasures to guard, no money to lose. Then again, in Naples, the people drink water in preference to spirituous liquors. It was a rare sight to see a drunken man. But in the London lodging-house, this was a scene of daily occurrence, especially towards the close of the meal. Then the confusion and uproar

would increase rapidly, and often disputes would arise, which only were settled with the greatest difficulty. Some would fall from their chairs, and be kicked under the table by their uncompassionate companions. The children had never witnessed anything of the kind before, and they clung trembling with fear to their father, who was as anxious to get away as they were.

The attention of the children was particularly attracted by the appearance of a man named Horsey. He was of gigantic stature, and would have been regarded as a handsome man, had it not been for a very small pug nose, and a wide mouth which stretched almost from ear to ear. By his side sat a very little man. He was an ugly



dwarf, with a thick head, and a face covered with wrinkles. His legs were crooked, his voice hoarse and shrill, while his little eyes gleamed with a cunning and wicked expression. These men were in the habit of exhibiting themselves in shows, and generally made Wilson's lodging-house their home. It was curious to see how submissive the giant was to his diminutive companion, who ruled him by a glance. Pigmy received all the money, and kept it; he gave orders about the provisions, and woe to the giant, if he ventured to ask for a drop more beer than was allowed him.

The children were delighted when the tedious meal was over, and when, with their father, they had taken refuge in their quiet

and solitary garret. The only furniture their apartment contained, was some clean straw with warm blankets, a table, and some chairs. Michaelo placed an oil lamp upon the table, and when he was leaving them, he said to Pietro and Carlo :

“ Good bye, dear children ; I must go and find out what will be the quickest way for us to earn money here. I shall not stay long in this place ; mind and keep quiet in the room while I am gone, and don’t play with the light. If you are hungry, you will find bread and cheese in the wallet, and a few pieces of roast beef. If you feel tired you can lie down ; and I dare say you will find it warmer in the straw, for we can’t light a fire in the room.”

The children followed their father's advice, and lay down, talking of their beautiful Naples.

Their room was just above the apartment in which they had dined, and loud noises still proceeded from it. Waggons and carriages were rumbling past in the street ; horses were stamping and coachmen talking ; but just close by them all was still, until, at length, they heard steps ascending the staircase, and passing by their room.

The door of the adjoining garret was opened ; and as it was only separated by a thin partition, they distinctly heard the voice of the ugly dwarf, who was, apparently, exceedingly enraged with the person he was addressing :

“Yes, and hungry, and thirsty, too, you shall remain to-night,” croaked he. “What business had you to come home so late? A pretty job you’ve made of it to-day; only tenpence, indeed! hardly enough to feed a mouse, much less a greedy child like you!”

“Oh! Mr. Pigmy,” answered a tremulous voice, “indeed I cannot get anything if I keep near the lodging-house; everybody about here has seen my white mouse. I went about three hours without getting a farthing, and I only got the tenpence by going a long way off to the hotel, and that made me so late.”

“Bah! you’re never at a loss for excuses, you good-for-nothing girl; but as you didn’t

choose to earn enough to pay for your food, you may go without anything. I dare say they gave you plenty to eat at the hotel, and if not, 'twill teach you better manners next time."

"*Mais, Monsieur*, I had noting to eat," said another childish and weeping voice. "*Mà marmotte* would sleep, and would not play its funny trick."

"You should have beaten the animal; that would have woke it up," returned the dwarf.

"*Comment ! battre mà marmotte*. I beat de poor marmotte; I could not do such wicked ting to *mà chère marmotte*. We are both so unhappy;" and the little speaker sobbed aloud.

“And I’ll make you more unhappy still before I’ve done with you,” growled the dwarf, whose voice expressed anger and impatience. “Have you got any more lies to tell me?”

“Oh!” said the little girl, apparently desirous of turning his anger from herself, “Louis was so stupid, he would not go with me to the tavern, because he said it was so far off; he thought he should catch a scolding, or, perhaps, something worse, when he came home. So I went alone, and as I came back, I found him in the street, covered with mud. Some boys had thrown him down, because his marmotte would sleep, and wouldn’t play any tricks.”

“A pretty tale!” cried Pigmy, his anger

increasing. "You may whistle for your new trowsers. But haven't you brought homè a single penny, you young rascal? Come, sir, out with what you have got."

Loud sobs were now heard; the poor little Savoyard, with his marmotte, seemed to have earned even less than the girl with the white mouse.

For some time, nothing was heard but shrieks, blows, and curses. The poor children were evidently receiving a severe chastisement, and the little Lazzaroni were so distressed, they scarcely knew how to contain themselves. They had never received a single blow from their father, hardly, indeed, a sharp word.

At length, to their delight, they heard the

door open, and the wrathful little man leave that part of the house.

The strange children continued sobbing, and lamenting over their wrongs, for a long time.

“Oh ! I wish I was at home with my mother,” said the little girl, weeping ; “how silly I was to leave her !”

“Oh, *mà mère*,” said the Savoyard, “I suffer dis for you. God bless you, *mà chère mère !*”

After a moment, the little boy added—  
“What shall I do ? I am so hungry, I have not had anyting to eat since de morning. I was afraid to buy of de people, and now I am so very hungry.”

Carlo could bear this no longer ; he rose



from the straw, and approached the wall that separated the two rooms. He tried to discern something through the crevices, but without success, as the other children had no light.

“If I can’t see, I can hear,” said he to himself, and he commenced a conversation with his young neighbours :—

“Is your room door open?” inquired he.  
“I have something for you to eat.”

“Who are you?” asked the little girl.

“We are two little Lazzaroni, who are come to earn money in London.”

“Do you belong to wicked Mr. Pigmy?”

“No, indeed,” said Pietro; “we have a kind father to take care of us.”

“What a stupid thing I was to ask you

such a question !” returned the girl. “ You would not have had any food to spare if you belonged to the dwarf. Do come in here ; it is so tiresome to be alone in the dark ; and then we can talk better.”

The two boys did not care much about talking ; but they wished to take some food to their neighbours. They therefore took the lamp, and all the provisions they could find in their father’s wallet, for they had no appetite themselves. But when they came to the door they found it was locked.

“ Oh ! the lock shan’t keep you out,” cried Louise, while she skilfully shook the door inside until it opened. “ Master Pigmy thinks he has his birds safe enough, but he doesn’t know how clever we are.”

Pietro and Carlo now entered the room, which was scarcely larger than the one they had left. Louis, the little Savoyard, was sitting on a heap of straw, rubbing the wales left by the stick.

"Here is something for you to eat," said Carlo; and Louis took what he offered him thankfully, and dried his tears while he ate.

"Will not you eat anything," asked Pietro of the little girl.

"No! I have taken care of myself," returned she, pertly; "I knew who I had to deal with, so I took care of myself at the tavern; 'twas that made me so late. I spent a shilling there. Whatever we bring home, old Pigmy is sure to beat

us, and it is easier to bear it with a full stomach. I don't care for the old fellow's cross words and blows, for I am used to them ; but I do care for hunger."

Pietro and Carlo examined their new acquaintances minutely. The girl appeared about twelve years old, she was slender, pretty, and tolerably well dressed. She wore a necklace and ear-rings, had dark eyes, shining black hair, which was turned up and gathered into a comb, and beautiful red lips, with rather a saucy expression ; on the whole, however, she was pretty, and pleasing in her appearance.

The little Savoyard could hardly be more than ten years of age, his eyes were sunken, his hair hung dishevelled about his face, his

cheeks were swollen, and he seemed very melancholy.

"That's right, look about you," said Louise, "this is our palace, our paradise. Isn't it a delightful place? We have been here a month; the evenings are terribly long and dull."

"Is the dwarf, who is so unkind to you, your father?" inquired Carlo.

"No, indeed!" returned Louise, in a whisper, "but we are in his power, we must bear his cruelty."

"But who is it makes you do that?" asked the Lazzaroni in great astonishment.

"Why where should we go," said Louise with a sigh, "if we did run away? I am

sorry enough now that I ever put myself in his power."

"What! did you come willingly with him? have you no father or mother?"

"Oh, yes! I have both in Italy, but I ran away from them."

"In Italy!" said the two boys, "why that is where our beautiful Naples is, so people say. But how could you leave your parents, if you were not obliged?"

"I will tell you all about it, if you like," returned Louise, beckoning to the children to seat themselves on the straw;—and the little girl began as follows:—

"My parents live in a pretty villa in Italy, and they keep a great many servants, so I suppose they are very rich. They loved me

very much, and were very kind to me, and if they had always kept me with them, I should never have run away. They used to let me do just as I pleased till I was six years old, and then Papa said I ought to learn to read, and Mamma thought so too, I believe—so they got a governess for me, but I did not like her at all, and what was more, I would not learn because I liked play so much better.

“The garden was very pleasant, and it was full of nice fruit, that I might pluck whenever I liked. Then there were a number of flowers, and a beautiful fountain in the middle, with gold and silver fish. And we had pigeons, and fowls, and a great many other pretty things.

“I had a donkey to ride, and a little carriage to be drawn about in, and I liked playing with all these nice things so much, that I would not learn to read. Then Papa became very angry, and sent me to school, where they made me attend to my books. I did not like this at all, for they often punished me, because I broke the rules, and did not mind what was said to me.

“I disliked the governess exceedingly ; she had a very long nose, and long teeth, and when she scolded, she made up ugly faces, and looked just as if she was going to bite. She often made me stand for hours at a time in a corner of the school-room, before all the girls ; and made me look on all dinner-time, instead of eating.



“But,” interrupted Pietro, “if you didn’t like being there, why didn’t you write, and ask your parents to let you go home?”

“Oh!” answered Louise, “we were not allowed to send any letters away, that had not first been seen by the governess. I wanted so much to see papa and mamma, and to complain of the way in which I was treated. But listen; one day, I put some money into the hand of the woman who helped me to dress (I knew that the governess was always scolding her), and I asked her if she would send out a letter secretly for me. She promised she would. This was capital news. So I wrote a long letter, and told all I wanted to tell; and I told pretty tales, as you may suppose, of

the governess. I made out my condition to be as wretched as possible, that my parents might come and take me away. I had never written such a long letter before, and when it was finished, I gave it to the woman, and went into school.

“When the play-hour began, one of my companions whispered to me, ‘You’ll catch it, Louise, for Beatrix has given your letter to the governess, I saw it on her desk.’”

This news frightened me so much, that when no one was looking, I crept behind some trees, and waited there, until all the young ladies were out of the garden, then I took a ladder, which the gardener used for gathering fruit, placed it against the wall, and mounted it. When I reached the

top, I tried to draw the ladder up that I might use it in getting down on the other side ; but I was not strong enough to lift it, the ladder slipped from my hands, and fell to the ground.

This made matters worse, for I could neither move backwards nor forwards. I knew if they found me I should have double punishment, first, for my letter, then for trying to run away ; and just while I was thinking what to do, I heard the voice of the governess, calling for me. I thought that anything was better than letting them find me, so I gave a good leap, and though it was a high wall, I got safe to the ground. I had sprained my ankle a little, but this did not prevent me from running as fast as I

could, on the road that I thought would lead me to Papa's house. "But I was soon quite at a loss which way to take ; and I grew very tired with running so fast ; my foot, too, was so painful, that at last I began to cry.

"Just then Mr. Pigmy came along the road in a covered cart. He promised to take me to my parents, because, he said, he had to go that way. I was so tired that I fell asleep, and when I woke, the cart had stopped, and he told me to go with him into a ship. At first I said I would not, because my parents did not live over the water. But he said he was going to take me to them by a shorter way. And as I still hesitated, and wanted to speak to the people near me, the dwarf told Horsey to carry me.

“Then we came a long way over the sea, and I was so sea-sick, that I did not care what became of me.

“When we came to London, Pigmy gave me a little white mouse; I thought it was instead of my playthings, and I played with it all day; but as soon as it began to be tame, and to know me, he sent me about the streets to get money by showing it and playing on the organ. Then he soon began to treat me unkindly if I did not bring home money enough, and I found that it was much worse to live with the dwarf, than with the governess.”

“But why don’t you run away,” asked Carlo, “if he treats you so badly?”

“That would be a wise thing to do, when

the wide sea lies 'between me and my parents. You don't know how frightened people are when they run away. I did run away once in London when Mr. Pigmy was gone out, but I ran just in his way, and he beat me so cruelly that I never dared to do it again. Yes, and he told me he would kill me, and let Horsey eat me, if ever I tried to run away again,"

The poor girl shuddered as she thought of that moment, and even the two Lazzaroni were quite afraid.

My little readers may learn from Louise's melancholy story, how foolish, as well as how wrong it is, to disobey their parents, and to refuse to submit to the restraint under which they are placed for their own good,

however unpleasant it may appear at the time.

“Would you like to see my little mouse?” asked Louise, after a few minutes; and her voice was again clear and cheerful; she was so giddy and thoughtless that she soon forgot what happened, whether it was good or bad.

The two boys followed her to the box which contained the mouse; it was perfectly white, and had little red eyes. When it saw Louise, it came and rubbed playfully at her fingers. She showed it a piece of sugar, and it sat up on its hind legs, holding up its paws as if begging for it. Louise took her hand-organ, and played “*Lieber Augustin* ;” whereupon the little animal began to dance,

and seemed quite merry. It also climbed up a small ladder, and then jumped down again.

“I wonder if the little mouse would dance if we played the zupfano,” said Pietro; and he and Carlo immediately fetched their instruments to play to the mouse. They were delighted to find it danced as nimbly to their music as it had to the hand-organ; and even Louise herself began to dance, she was so excited by hearing the same sweet sounds she had so often heard in Italy.

Louis, the young Savoyard, had been engaged in demolishing the food all this time; he must have been very hungry; and now, though he was satisfied, he looked as melancholy as ever.



“Do let us see your marmotte,” said Carlo to him.

“*Là marmotte* is asleep,” returned Louis, “I must not wake *là marmotte*; it sleeps ver’ strong.”

He led the children softly to a box, which he carefully opened :

“Dat,” whispered he, “is de only friend of de poor Savoyard boy—he has no oder in England.”

“How came you to leave your parents?” inquired Pietro. “Did you run away, too?”

“Oh, no ! I loved *mà mère* so moch, and *mà mère* loved me too; but we were ver’ poor; I had a marmotte and my broder had a marmotte; but *mà mère* had no bread.

Den we went away from de mountains ; we went to Paris, and we asked de people to give us food for *mà mère*. Some of de good people gave us some money when dey saw dat she look so ill. Oh ! she look so pale and white as de white mouse, and she was always so tired. Den she became quite bad, and she did fall down in de street, and could not get up. And we had so ver' little money, and *mà mère* had no bed, no house, no warm soup, and no warm tings. But de street was ver' cold. Den came Monsieur Pigmy, and he look at me, and at *mà marmotte*, and he say he like us ; and he say too :

“ ‘I will give fifty francs if one of dese boys will go wid me to London.’

"Fifty francs was ver' moch money, and we could get none, because *mà mère* was too ill to go wid us, and de people did not care for de marmotte. Which of us could go away? My broder was little, and not strong; I was big, and strong too. And Valentine was so gentle and kind wid *mà mère*. Oh! we loved each oder so moch; but Monsieur Pigmy gave dem de fifty francs, and I came away wid him."

Poor little Louis wept bitterly as he related his touching history.

"And will you never return to your mother?" asked the boys.

"I'm afraid she will be dead," sobbed the child; "I have not heard of her for ver' long time."

“Then must you always stay with the wicked man?”

“He say, he buy me and de marmotte for de fifty francs. Oh ! if I could only get de money, I would give him de fifty francs back. But I cannot ; and so I and *mà marmotte* must die in dis horrid London, and not see *mà mère*, Valentine, and de beautiful mountains again.”

And again Louis wept aloud.

Steps were now heard on the staircase, and the children turned pale.

“Dat is Pigmy,” cried Louis, as he leaped into bed, trembling with fear.

The two Lazzaroni were no less terrified, but Louise laughed.

“Why are you so afraid?” asked she.

"It can't be Pigmy come home, because this is just the time when he is in the show with the giant. He never dares to go out in the daytime, for all the boys run after him, and see him without paying anything. He has shown himself in all the places near, so he must be gone a long way off ; I don't believe he will be home before midnight."

The footsteps, however, approached the door.

"It is Pluto with his monkey," added Louise, after she had listened for a few seconds ; and, in confirmation of her words, a black head appeared at the door, and a really pretty negro boy sprang into the room, with a box on his shoulder. In this box was concealed the wonderful monkey. Pluto had

been very successful, and laid a handful of money on the table.

“He won’t flog me to-day,” said the boy, in broken English, whilst his cheerful smile showed his white teeth to advantage. To be secure from blows, seemed to him to be the height of happiness.

“But you are never going to give all that money to the wicked old dwarf,” cried Louise ; “that would be a silly trick.”

“What should I do with it?” asked Pluto.

“Do ! why hide half of it, and save it till you have a bad day.”

“Yes, and till Miss Louise has spent it. No ; I know better. ‘Honesty is the best policy.’”

“I don’t see anything wrong in cheating a man like Pigmy ; he has deceived us often enough,” said Louise. “’Tis only tit for tat.”

“Pigmy is Pluto’s master,” returned the black boy, showing his teeth again. “Mr. Pigmy has paid for me with his money, and I belong to him, and so does what I earn, and my monkey too.”

“You stupid slave,” said Louise, shrugging her shoulders, “any one may see that you are only fit to be a servant. We white people know better than to submit so willingly.”

“I know that well enough ; and so you catch plenty of floggings. I see how master has been at you again, by the red marks on

your neck and arms," returned the negro, as he pointed derisively at his little white companions in trouble.

"Will you show us your monkey?" asked Pietro, who feared the conversation might end in a quarrel ; and, at his request, Pluto released the little animal from its confinement. It was dressed in a red jacket and green trowsers. It took astonishing leaps, made faces, and jumped about the boxes of the mouse and the marmotte as if it were mad. It bit Louise in the finger because she teased it, and caused the children more fun than they had had for a long time.

On the whole, the young Neapolitans had found as much amusement as if they had been in Naples, and they took an unwilling



leave of their young companions, when they heard their father's voice from the adjoining room.

"Come again to-morrow," Louise called after them, "we shall be alone again then."

The children promised, but were unable to keep their word.

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## Chapter Seventh.

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MICHAELO could not speak English, and had therefore found so much difficulty in making himself understood by the managers of the different concerts, that no one would engage him. Pigmy had done his best to prevent the taverns and public-gardens from being open to him. He had affirmed that nothing worth hearing could be performed upon such little wooden instruments; for Pigmy was

not only afraid that his own trade might be injured by Michaelo's success, but he was envious and mean.

Michaelo, therefore, was compelled to have recourse to his old practice of standing with his boys in the streets. He fixed upon what he considered a favourable position, and then he and the twins commenced their performance.

Their appearance was such a novelty in London, where no Lazzaroni had been seen before, that they attracted a great deal of notice, and were well rewarded for their exertions.

But the most fortunate thing for them was, that a wealthy nobleman happening to pass by at the time, was so delighted

with this original kind of concert, that he desired Michaelo to bring his sons to his house, in the evening of the following day, as he was about to give a grand entertainment, in celebration of his daughter's marriage.

Michaelo was very much pleased with this occurrence, and the same evening he followed the advice given him by one of the nobleman's servants, to take apartments in a more respectable neighbourhood.

The nobleman's intention in ordering the attendance of Michaelo on the following evening, was to surprise the guests who were to be present at his fête, with an entertainment which would be at once novel and interesting.

The suite of rooms in which the company were assembled, terminated in a splendid conservatory, near the entrance of which, was a beautiful grove of orange-trees, myrtles, and rare and costly evergreens.

All the company were attracted to this spot, which appeared to be occupied by sweet singing birds of all descriptions, though none could be seen. The warbling of the lark was only surpassed by the exquisite notes of the nightingale; while the thrush, the finch, and the linnet, added their sweet songs to the glorious harmony. At length, at a given signal, the branches were pushed aside, and Michaelo appeared in the midst, with his zupalino, and his two children on his shoulders, while they con-

tinued to perform, to the admiration of all around.

The account of this entertainment found its way into the papers on the following day; and the consequence was, the fame of the talented Lazzaroni spread so rapidly, that Michaelo was at a loss to answer all the orders that poured in upon him, and his purse began to fill rapidly.

In the mean time, Louise, the little Savoyard, and Pluto, spent many long and wearisome evenings, looking for the promised visit of the two Lazzaroni boys. At last poor Louise gave up all hope of seeing them again.

“We shall have no more pleasant talk with them,” said she one evening, to Louis.

"It is not kind of them to forget us so soon. Here we are shut up in this dark hole, and because they have got a pleasanter lodging, they don't think of their promise. But I should like to see them so very much."

"I see dem every day, now," returned Louis, "and I speak always to Carlo and Pietro."

He then told her that one evening he had shown his marmotte in a wide street. When the time for returning home had arrived, he sat down on the steps of a large inn, to count his money, and he found, to his distress, that he had not the required sum.

At the thought that he would again have to go without food, and perhaps be beaten into the bargain, he began to cry bitterly.

A window opened above his head, and Carlo and Pietro looked out ; they were blowing bubbles, and Louis did not see them, until a bubble alighted on his nose. He then looked up from his money, and the little Lazzaroni saw that he really was their new acquaintance. They came down, and took him into their room, which was very comfortable, and then they gave him plenty to eat, and Michaelo made up the sum he required. He also told the poor boy to come every night to have his supper, adding ; “Only pray to God, my boy, and you will not remain long so unhappy.”

“Ah ;” sighed little Louis, as he finished his tale, “if de good Lazzaroni would only take me back to see *mà chère mère* and Valen-



tine, how happy I should be. But who would pay so much as fifty francs, for de poor Savoyard and his marmotte."

The success of the Lazzaroni excited the envy of all the tribe of those who, like themselves, were going about to earn money. They were no longer treated as wandering musicians, but as real artists, and Michaelo was wise enough to take every opportunity of affording his sons the instruction they needed. No one was more enraged than Pigmy, the ugly dwarf, who, with his giant, his white mouse, marmotte, and monkey, never gained enough to satisfy his avarice. Every day he became more close, and his temper more violent, while his dislike of the little Lazzaroni, amounted to bitter hatred.

"I will do for them," said he to himself, and he seriously meditated doing them an injury. But at length it occurred to him that he might at the same time take his revenge and benefit himself. He therefore decided upon getting the children into his power, and taking them immediately over into Germany, where he could make use of their talents for his own profit."

"Listen !" said he one evening to Horsèy, "to-morrow I shall want the use of your strong arms and long legs !"

The Lazzaroni had been engaged to perform that evening in one of the public gardens, and Michaelo had determined that this should be the last time of their appearing in England. "So my boys," he said, "the day

after to-morrow, if all is well, we will set off to return to our beautiful Naples. We have earned money enough to make us comfortable there, and then you shall each learn some useful business, that will be far better for you than continuing this wandering life."

Pigmy made all the necessary arrangements for carrying out his scheme, and felt so sure of success, that he even engaged berths for the children on board a vessel that was to set sail on the following day.

In order that he might more easily entice the children away, he took Louis into the gardens, and, as he expected, no sooner had the performance ceased, and placed Carlo and Pietro at liberty, than they ran to greet their little friend.

“Ha ! ha !” said he to himself, “my prey don’t require pursuing, they come of their own accord.”

A merry conversation began between the children, of which Pigmy availed himself to get all the money he had earned out of Louis’ pockets. He had followed the profession of a pickpocket in his youth, and was a very skilful thief. His next business was to go up to Michaelo, and persuade him to walk aside with him, as he had something particular to say. He had previously desired Horsey to go to the children, and demand his earnings from Louis.

The poor child searched in all his pockets. He was certain that he had wrapped his money up in a piece of paper, and had taken

great care of it. But now, he could not find it anywhere; and he grew quite pale with fear.

“I have lost it,” said he, wringing his hands. “What shall I do?”

But Horsey seized hold of his collar, and dragged him behind some trees.

“*Mù marmotte!*” cried the boy. “Oh, *mù marmotte!* I shall lose *mù marmotte!*”

Carlo and Pietro had both set off running after him, to endeavour to persuade Horsey not to beat him; but when they remembered how much the poor child loved his marmotte, they decided that Carlo should stay behind, and take care of it. Pietro then ran forward to offer some money to the giant. They knew how willing their father was

to help any who were in trouble, so that they did not fear but that he would pay the sum Louis had lost.

Pietro followed the direction of the little Savoyard's cries, and Carlo soon had the satisfaction of hearing them no more.

He waited by the marmotte, hoping that Louis and his brother would return, but they did not come. The gardens began to be deserted, and Carlo did not know what to do. At last he saw his father approaching him, who seemed very angry that the dwarf should have detained him so long for a mere trifle. He had only asked him to take Louise back with him to Italy ; as he said she gave him so much trouble, spent his money, and cheated him.

"He need not have made all this fuss about it," said Michaelo. "Of course any one would be willing to take a child back to her parents. But where is Pietro?" he asked eagerly, when he saw but one of the twins. "And why are you taking care of that box?"

Carlo related what had taken place; and Michaelo searched in all directions for his lost child. At first he was displeased that he should have kept away so long, but at length he became very anxious.

He engaged a man to watch the marmotte, and, in case Pietro returned, to bring him to the inn. Then he and Carlo made their way home as quickly as possible, hoping that Pietro might have returned before them.

When he found that this was not the case, he went to the lodging-house, imagining that the dwarf and his victims still lived there. Here he learnt that Pigmy had left that very day, with the intention of going away by a vessel that was expected to sail early in the morning.

A horrible suspicion of the truth now flashed across Michaelo's mind ; and, without losing any time, he gave information to the police, of the loss of his child and the probable hiding-place of the robbers.

Poor Pietro had, in the mean while, to pass through many sorrowful hours. He had come up with Horsey, just as he reached a small door in the garden which was never used by the public. This place was quite



lonely, and Horsey had concealed near it two sacks, which he had destined for the two Lazzaroni. When he saw that but one of them had followed, he was very much disconcerted ; however, this did not prevent him from laying hold of poor Pietro, and tying him up in one of the sacks.

When Louis saw what he was doing, he, for the first time, forgot his marmotte, and called out for help, while he tried to hinder Horsey as much as possible. But the giant quickly prevented him from giving an alarm ; he stopped his mouth, and put him into the other sack. As Louis was much taller than Pietro, his legs stuck out, and he employed them in kicking vigorously in all directions. But all his exertions were useless. Horsey

could have conquered ten boys of his size, and with little difficulty he succeeded in depositing his burdens in a vehicle that was waiting outside ; upon which he quickly drove away.

After they had proceeded for about an hour, the cart stopped, and they were lifted out. When released from their sacks, they found themselves in a dark, close room, where they had never been before ; and they could get no answer to their often repeated inquiry of "Where are we?"

Pietro now took a commanding tone, and desired the giant, on pain of his father's anger, to let him go home. Horsey took no notice, but stood by the door as stiff and immoveable as a statue.

Pietro grew still more enraged.

“I will go back,” said he, “to my father and to Carlo. No one has a right to keep me here; I am a free Lazzaroni. I will tell all about it, and you shall have your head cut off. You have not bought me, and you have no right to keep me.”

Just then, Pigmy’s voice was heard in the adjoining room. He opened the door, and said,—

“The wind is favourable, and the ship will soon sail, so we must be off directly. The coach is at the door.”

“But *mà marmotte!*” cried Louis, “*mà marmotte* is in de garden still. Monsieur Horsey took me away from it.”

“It will be easy enough to get another

of the animals. But where is the other young Lazzaroni?"

"The other didn't come," answered the giant, "and as I could not get both, I only took one."

"Fool!" growled the dwarf, "I am prettily cheated then; one is of no use without the other. However, we'll see what can be done—away with you—if the rascal is worth nothing, we'll just throw him into the sea."

"If you think I am going to earn money for you with my zufalino, you are mistaken. I would rather throw it out of the window," said Pietro, scornfully.

"Ha! ha! we've a way of taming young gentlemen," returned the dwarf, pointing to the giant, who certainly seemed fully capable

of checking the boldest movements of the little boy.

Pietro felt this, and therefore rather altered his tone.

“If you will only take me back, my father will give you ever so much money. Indeed, we have a great deal ; and I am sure he will pay you well.”

“We can get that in Germany. Come down into the coach, and don’t give any more trouble. Pluto and Louise are there already.”

Pietro, however, was not inclined to submit passively ; he shrieked out as loudly as he could, called for help, and ran about the room, creeping under the chairs and table.

The giant and the dwarf chased him, and

the latter placed the lamp on the table, in order to be more at liberty to lay hold of him. Pietro, perceiving this, overturned the table, and the lamp went out. The door opened upon a long passage, in which a light was always kept burning.

“Don’t let him out,” cried Pigmy, “I will go and get a light, or we shall break our noses.”

Horsey placed himself before the door, but Pietro had been quicker than he, and had already slipped out. The lamp in the passage betrayed him, Pigmy saw him running along one side.

“Horsey, Horsey, stupid fellow! he has got away—after him, after him!” cried he, in a loud voice, and Horsey obeyed.

“If I were but in the street,” thought Pietro, “I would shriek out loudly enough.” He reached the door. Horsey was at his heels—alas! the door was locked. A basket of wood stood by the wall, and Pietro, in utter despair, seized hold of this, and threw it with all his might against the giant’s legs, so that he stumbled and fell. While he was recovering himself, Pietro found a second door, which led into a dark room. He rushed in and bolted it. “Perhaps I am safe here,” said he to himself, as he sat down on the sofa to rest.

Some one came and tried the door; and then for a few minutes all was still. Pietro’s heart beat high with hope. Could it be that the dwarf had gone away? At that moment

he saw a glimmer of light in the room, it came from the opposite side, where there was a second door, and this was not locked. Pietro had hardly time to crawl under the sofa ; he shut his eyes, and all his strength left him.

Horsey and Pigmy entered with lights ; the poor fugitive was of course soon found ; they drew him from his hiding-place by his legs, and beat him soundly for his obstinacy, and the trouble he had given them. Poor Pietro was quite dispirited, and felt no inclination again to attempt to escape.

During this scene, the young Savoyard had quietly slipped out of the house ; he determined upon making an effort to save his little benefactor.



At the door stood the coach, with Louise and Pluto inside. "I will save you all; we will all be happy once more," cried Louis, as he ran down the street.

He did not think of his marmotte now, for his whole mind was occupied in thinking of Pietro. If he could only have found Michaelo's lodging, he would have been safe. But this was a difficult matter. It was two o'clock in the morning, and very dark, but the lamps enabled him to find his way along the street. He was obliged to hasten, for if Pigmy discovered his flight, he knew Horsey's long legs would soon overtake him. He fancied every moment he heard footsteps behind him, and the poor child rushed along as if he had been a thief.

As he turned the corner of a street, a constable met him : "Hallo ! my man," said he, "where do you come from ? and where are you running so fast ?"

Louis knew but little English, and just at this moment it seemed to him that he had forgotten what he did know ; he felt he could not explain himself clearly, and he was in despair.

"No one would be running about the street at this time of night, who had not been doing something bad," said the man.

"*Misericorde, monsieur*, I am a poor child, wid his marmotte."

"Where is your marmotte, you little rogue ? A real Savoyard boy is never seen without his marmotte."

“*Mà marmotte* is gone, but will you save de little Lazzaroni, he will be robbed by de wicked men, and den dey will put him in de water.”

“A pretty tale indeed ! Come, sir, you must march along with me.”

“*Oh non ! non ! ayez pitié* on de poor Savoyard, pity de little Pietro ; come wid me to Michaelo, dey have taken his boy away.”

“Nonsense,” said the constable, “you must come with me.”

So saying, he took Louis by the collar, and was about to drag him away, when a tall figure turned the corner ; it was the giant, who had been sent after him by Pigmy.

“Give me the boy,” said he, “he has run away from us.”

"I thought as much, you little rascal, what do you say now?" asked the man, roughly.

"Oh ! do not give me back to de giant," implored the child, "let me go wid you, anyting is better den to go wid Monsieur Pigmy."

Steps were now heard on the opposite side of the road, it was Michaelo, Carlo, and several men, who were assisting him in searching for his child.

"Oh, save Pietro, save your boy," Louis shrieked as soon as he recognized him, "he will be robbed and thrown into de water."

The constables now clearly understood the matter. They compelled Horsey to lead the way, and they soon found the coach in which

were Pietro and Louise, both weeping ; they were bound hand and foot, that they might not be able to offer any resistance.

Pigmy and the giant were taken prisoners, and led away by the constables.

Michaelo took charge of the children ; “Now,” said he to himself, “I find the benefit of being rich, for I who once had no home, can now give shelter to the homeless, food to the hungry, and protection to those who need it.”

Pigmy was found guilty of child-stealing, and was sentenced to be transported, but Horsey was pardoned, as it was evident that he had been a mere tool of the dwarf’s, and he for the future earned his bread as a day-labourer.

Pluto had vanished with his monkey, he had unfortunately been the first to go on board, and had left England in the ship.

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## Chapter Eighth.

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MICHAELO'S original intention had been to return to Italy immediately after leaving London. But he now altered his mind, and determined to take the present opportunity of travelling throughout England and Scotland. He proposed to Louis that he should accompany them ; and he promised, at the same time, to take upon himself the charge

of his board, lodging, and travelling expenses.

The poor Savoyard was overjoyed at this generous offer ; and it was accordingly agreed upon, that while his kind friends were adding to their store by performing on the zupfalo, he should endeavour, by means of his marmotte, to lay by a little sum to carry home to his *chère mère*.

Michaelo would willingly have made arrangements for Louise's returning at once to her parents ; but the little girl pleaded so hard to be allowed to accompany them, that he at length consented for her to remain with them until he could himself take her back.

Having, at length, visited all the principal



places in the kingdom, and realized a large sum of money, the Lazzaroni, with his little charge, returned to France.

Again in Paris they found a willing and generous audience ; and, to add to their pleasure, they learnt that Mons. Raisin and his family were residing there. The children were overjoyed at the thought of meeting their young favourites again. Well they remembered Jean Baptiste and his sister Babette. And scarcely would they allow their father time to refresh himself, before they urged him to take them at once to their lodgings.

During the Lazzaroni's absence in England, Raisin had become convinced that Jean Baptiste was too weak and sickly

to continue his gainful occupation. Still, he could not make up his mind to give the poor child all the rest he required. It was true he loved his children dearly, but he had suffered so much from poverty in early life, that now, that a lucrative path had opened before him, he was tempted to sacrifice everything to his passion for gaining money. He therefore continued to make his child practise as much as ever ; the only difference being, that he was no longer shut up in the harpsichord.

Poor little Baptiste continued to decline—and when, at last, his father's eyes were opened to the real state of his health,—alas ! it was too late. Raisin now used every means to procure his restoration to health,

but, as day after day passed away, Jean grew rapidly worse and worse ; and a few weeks before Michaelo's arrival in Paris, the sorrowing father had consigned his child to the tomb.

Poor Pietro and Carlo were inconsolable when they heard of the death of their little friend ; and they gladly obeyed their father's summons to leave the gaiety of Paris, and pursue their way to Naples.

They first went towards the home of Louis, in Savoy. He said his mother used to live in a small hut at the foot of a mountain, not far from a village.

As they approached the spot, poor Louis' anxiety became almost unbearable. Was it not most likely that he should find his

mother dead? He remembered how ill she was when he left her. Then, again, even if she were still alive, it was not improbable that she had been unable to leave Paris and return to her humble home. He had now been absent two years, and all that time he had received no intelligence either of her or his brother. His legs trembled, and almost refused to support him, as he turned the last corner that concealed the little cottage from his view. There it stood, just the same as when, poor and hungry, he had forsaken it. And oh! what joy! Before the door sat his dear mother, with Valentine kneeling at her side.

“*Mà mère ! mà chère mère !*” shouted Louis, unable to contain himself. He ran



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The return of Louis, the Savoyard boy, to his mother and Valentine.



up, and threw his arms round her neck. The poor woman could hardly believe that she really clasped her long-lost boy in her arms. And for some minutes she could not speak.

Valentine, however, showed his delight in a very different way. He skipped round and round his brother, kissed him, shook hands, laughed and cried, all at the same moment ; and before Louis had been there many minutes, he ran to fetch his marmotte, that the two animals might together share their joy.

That was a happy day in the Savoyard's cottage. Michaelo had taken care to come well supplied with provisions, for he had not expected to find much on the spot. Louis

had put by a hundred francs, which he immediately gave to his mother, who had never been so rich before. And when he told her how good the Lazzaroni had been to him, the poor woman overwhelmed Michaelo with thanks and blessings.

Michaelo would now gladly have proceeded to Naples without further delay, but he had still one duty to fulfil ; that of restoring Louise to her parents.

“ Louise,” said he to her as they were travelling along, “ you have caused a great deal of sorrow to your parents, and when you get back you must show that you are worthy of their forgiveness by increased dutifulness and obedience. You have many faults that you ought to try and conquer. If you do



not, depend upon it you will be anything but a comfort to your father and mother."

The little girl made no reply, but something like a sneer passed over her face. And when she was alone with Pietro and Carlo, she said, "Your father is mistaken if he thinks I am going to be found fault with by him. One comfort is, I shall soon be at home now, and then I can do as I please again."

"That is Papa's villa," cried she as they saw in the distance a pretty country-house, surrounded with groves of orange trees. "It is rather different to Louis' home."

"We shall see whether your parents will be as glad to see you, as his poor mother was to see him," said Michaelo.

The carriage stopped, and they passed through a large and beautiful garden. The house was surrounded by a shady colonade, and everything bespoke the wealth of the proprietor.

"The servants will come out soon," said Louise, with a toss of her head. For she liked exceedingly the idea that the Lazzaroni should know that her parents could afford to keep a great many. But alas ! no one was to be seen, nor could they make any one hear. At length, Louise, impatient at the delay, opened the hall door, and entered. What a sight met her eyes ! she almost sank down with consternation.

The large hall was hung with black. In the centre was a black coffin. At the

head stood her father, like a statue, and in the coffin lay her mother, whom she had so long and anxiously wished to see, dead and cold.

Louise was thunderstruck. She had no power to speak, or to answer the inquiring looks of the servants who stood around. In her simple attire, and accompanied by the Lazzaroni, she was recognized by no one. Even her father took no further notice of the group, than to motion to the attendants to send them away.

For the first time Louise was conscious of the sin she had committed in running away, and the thought that it was too late to receive her mother's forgiveness almost overpowered her. She clasped her hands and

fell on her knees before her father, "Papa, will you forgive me?" she cried, in an imploring voice. But her father turned a cold and angry glance upon her, "You have killed your mother. It is you I have to thank that I am now a widower." As he said this, he turned his back upon her, and went into an adjoining room.

Louise in despair threw herself on the body, and sobbed aloud, "Mamma, oh forgive me, dear mamma."

"She did forgive you, my dear child," said an old servant, who had been Louise's nurse. "Her last word was 'Louise' and she was always praying for her lost child."

Michaelo now went to Louise's father and endeavoured to persuade him to receive his

child. He told him how severely she had suffered in punishment of her fault. And though he did not conceal from him that the little girl wanted much care and watchfulness, he implored him to educate her with a father's love, and to carry out the wishes her dead mother had expressed.

Having succeeded in seeing the heart-broken child restored to her father, Michaelo took his leave, but not before he had received substantial proof of gratitude from the gentleman. The latter also insisted upon paying for the travelling expenses of his child. And Michaelo, who thought he was now rich enough, sent this last sum to the poor Savoyard family.

At length Naples lay before their eyes,

smiling and beautiful as when they left it.  
It seemed to the wanderers more beautiful  
than ever.

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## Chapter Ninth.

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MICHAELO'S heart beat high with joy at the success of his enterprise, as he entered his native city riding in a comfortable carriage. Three years before, he and his children had left it, trudging wearily on foot. The first thought of the twins, was to hasten to the church of Saint Januarius, and endeavour to learn something of their former playmates, Beata and Anna. They were compelled to

drive slowly, as a funeral procession, chiefly composed of Lazzaroni, was passing along the street.

In Naples, it is not usual to carry the dead in coffins to the grave, but with the head resting on a cushion, so that the face can be seen. The body, in this case, was that of a young girl ; a crown of white roses was twined in her long black hair, and a white robe covered her, over which were strewn flowers and ribbons. As the children passed directly by it, they recognized the features of their friend Beata. This unexpected meeting with one they had loved so well, overwhelmed them with grief, and, at their urgent request, their father took them by a shorter way to the Campo Santo, the



burying-ground, so that they arrived before the procession.

The Campo Santo is a large square, containing numerous vaults, or graves, situated at equal distances from each other. These are covered down with square flagstones of lava, in which an iron ring is inserted, and they are hermetically sealed. Each is numbered; and every day one is opened, to receive the dead, from morning to midnight; lime is then thrown in, and it is closed up. After the lapse of one year, the vault is again opened; by that time, nothing remains but the bones and skulls, which are taken out, and burnt for manure. This burying-ground is surrounded by walls on three sides, on the fourth are buildings for the reception

of the bodies before they are thrown into the vaults. \*

The children had hoped to find little Anna following in the funeral procession, but in this they were disappointed. They made inquiries of all likely to be informed, but no one could give them any information about her ; and, at length, quite dispirited, they left the burying-ground.

\* A great improvement has taken place in Naples, with regard to the burial of the dead, since this little tale was written. The Campo Santo is now converted into a beautiful cemetery ; and a recent writer says, "We wound through winding paths, amidst beds of shrubs and flowers, pausing every now and then at some funeral urn or monument, which, by its chaste white marble, formed a striking contrast to the foliage around. The graves of the poor are in rows, with a black cross at the head of each, some with a short inscription ; while the mausoleums of the wealthy often contain an altar with lamps, &c."—*Letters from the Continent*.

Early the following morning, they went to the church of Saint Januarius, to make further inquiries about the orphan sister.

A man with a crutch stood by the church, precisely in the same spot that they remembered him to have occupied, for many years, before they left. To all appearance, he suffered from incurable lameness, though his acquaintances knew full well, that he was as able to walk as they were. To him the boys addressed themselves, and asked him if he knew the cause of Beata's death, and what had happened to the sisters since their departure.

"Ah!" said he, "she and her sister were half-starved for some time. Who was there to give them anything after Michaelo left?

We could only earn just enough for ourselves. At last, their uncle, who is the keeper of the Dog-Grotto, took pity on them. He had not been on good terms with their father, because he had taken Vesuvius, and had left him to shift as well as he could with the Grotto. But when he heard how badly the children were off, he took Anna to live with him, and Beata went into service. She had a good time of it with a woman who kept a donkey, and it was her place to drive it out, with its young one. We warned her of the vipers; there are so many of them in the fields, and all the country-people wear thick woollen stockings about their legs, to protect them. Poor Beata had not any, and what is more, had no money to buy them.

“‘The vipers know better than to bite me,’ she used to say when she went out; and then, when she came back, she would say, ‘There, you see, I have not been bitten.’”

“But what we feared happened at last, and her leg swelled, and she died. Poor Anna! I suppose she knows of it by this time. The child cried as if her heart would break when she left her sister, just as if she feared she should never see her again.”

Michaelo promised the children he would soon take them to see Anna. But he wished, first, to get settled in some permanent place of abode. He hired a pretty cottage in the neighbourhood of the Chiaja Quay, and he then engaged a good instructor for his two boys.

"It is true enough," said he, "that one can get through the world, and be happy and contented, without learning ; but for all that, learning is a good thing."

Each of the children was presented with a flute, in place of the zufalino ; and on these he wished them to become first-rate performers. For Michaelo had seen enough of the world to know that his success had been owing more to the novelty of the thing than to the greatness of their skill.

After some days, Michaelo and his boys set off to the Grotto del Cane. It was on an Easter Monday ; and as they passed the village of Antignano, they encountered the

Popish processions that are always customary on that day.

The Virgin Mary was represented by a wooden doll, as large as life, which was carried on the heads of four Lazzaroni, who walked under a canopy. Mary Magdalene, and St. John, were also to be seen stationed in a square in Antignano, where several streets united.

First arrived a long procession, with the madonna at the head, concealed in a long black veil; and then came a second procession, following the figure of the Saviour. This joined the first, and entered the church amid the shoutings of the people.

I need scarcely remind my young readers that thus to render honour to those who were human like ourselves, and to worship an image of the Divine Saviour, is in direct disobedience to the law of God. These poor people, misled, as they were, by the priests, were ignorant of the command, "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image," and they thought that this idolatrous ceremony was pleasing to God.

This procession had detained the children so long, that it was getting late when they entered a forest on the other side of the village. The night was very beautiful, but unusually dark.

Michaelo had just uttered the words, "We



had better return to Antignano, and wait until to-morrow, to visit the Grotto," when they suddenly heard cries for help in the wood. It seemed to be a woman's voice.

Michaelo sprang from the caleche, drew his knife, and ran hastily to the spot from whence the cries proceeded.

A young man had attempted to rob a girl of her money ; and when she called him by his name, he was so afraid she would betray him, that he dragged her aside in order to murder her. When, however, he saw the Lazzaroni's knife glitter in the darkness, the ruffian ran away, leaving the poor girl in a fainting state.

Michaelo conveyed her to the caleche, and

they immediately turned the horse's head towards Naples.

When the girl came to herself, they recognized in her the fig-dealer, at whose expense the two brothers had enjoyed their treat of figs ; and it was the cause of no little pleasure to them, to think they had had an opportunity of making amends for the trick they had played upon her.

The next day they performed their original intention of visiting the grotto. First, they came to the Agnano Lake, which is surrounded by hills. It is situated upon volcanic ground, and is evidently nothing else than a crater.

At different parts of the surface of the lake, the water appears to boil. It has two

distinct tastes ; above, it is sweet, below, it is salty ; and though no fish are to be found in it, it is very much frequented by frogs. It is said that in Spring the serpents hasten thither to drown themselves. It is certain that many dead bodies of serpents are found in the water, which doubtless have fallen in from the shore, and been stifled by the vapours.

On the southern side of this lake is the celebrated Grotto del Cane. It is a hole in the rock, ten feet long, four feet wide, and about nine feet high ; and for about ten inches from the ground, the air is full of carbonic acid gas. This air has the effect of stifling any living being that is thrown into it ; but the quick return into

the fresh air, and a dip into the lake, revive it again. As it is customary to perform this cruel experiment with dogs, the Grotto has been called the Grotto del Cane.

A small hut, in which the cicerone dwelt, stood just at the entrance. Here they inquired for Anna, and were told that, most likely, she was in the Grotto, with her dog, Cora.

The children wished to surprise her, and they therefore entered the cavern. The cicerone was there with some strangers, showing them its wonders. He held forward a lighted torch, which was gradually extinguished by the noxious air. Then he fired a loaded pistol, but though it went off,

there was no flash. The boys were too much occupied in searching for Anna, to notice very attentively what he was doing ; but they could not see her anywhere. A black dog, however, was near them ; and very soon the cicerone turned round and whistled to it to come to him. The poor animal appeared very much distressed, and when laid hold of by the ears, she moaned so mournfully, that it was evident she dreaded the trial awaiting her. She was held suspended over the vapour, and in a short time the expected effect was produced : her whole body was convulsed ; her eyes started ; her tongue hung out ; and in two minutes she lay upon the ground, to all appearance dead.

Just then, a little girl came running up to the poor animal :

“Oh, my dear Cora,” said she “have you had to die again ?” With these words, she took up the dog, hurried out of the Grotto, and dipped her in the lake. Almost immediately the animal revived, and though, at first, she staggered about as if bewildered, she soon shook off the water, and returned her young mistress’s caresses.

Anna (for it was she) wept for joy and sorrow, when she saw Carlo and Pietro. She introduced the dog to them as Cora’s child :

“Poor Cora !” said she ; “how sorry she would have been if she had known how often her child would have to die ! Why cannot

the strangers be satisfied with seeing vipers and frogs stifled, instead of this poor harmless creature?"

Michaelo then said to her, "Would you like to come and live with us? We are rich, and will take care of you."

"But may Cora go with me?" inquired Anna. "I cannot leave her; for she has no one else to take care of her. When they put her into that horrible hole, I always bring her back to life, and make her as happy as I can. Her mother, Cora, told me to take care of her."

The two boys smiled.

"Ah!" added Anna; "you may laugh, but I know she meant that. She looked at me so imploringly when she was

dying ; and her puppy was only a few days old ; and I knew what she wished to say."

" You may bring Cora with you," said Michaelo. " We must have a dog to guard our house."

" Your house !" repeated Anna. " Have you really got a nice house ? and will you let me live in it with you ?"

" You will soon see !" returned the boys.

Anna now took leave of her uncle, who was so poor, that he was not sorry to be relieved from his charge. And she and Cora returned with their friends to Naples.

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## Chapter Tenth.

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ANNA now took part in the studies and employment, of her young friends; for Michaelo treated her as if she were his own child. As he had not permitted the twins to abandon the Lazzaroni dress, she always appeared in the simple Neapolitan costume. Part of each day she spent in learning such things as were necessary to make her useful in the house. And though up to the time of

her entering Michaelo's family, she had passed an idle life, the little girl soon found great pleasure in taking part in the cares of the small establishment.

Michaelo and his children had learned, during their travels, to like a greater variety of food than that to which they were before accustomed. And as he could afford it, his table was always well supplied. But every Sunday evening, their supper consisted of a simple dish of maccaroni. He was anxious that his children should not lose their relish for their national food, nor be unmindful of the time when they had nothing better to eat.

Now, that the children lived in a comfortable house, and were abundantly supplied

with all that they needed, they often pitied the young Lazzaroni that they met in the streets, and many a time did they endeavour to persuade their father to adopt some of their former companions.

“Were you then so very unhappy when we lived in the open air?” inquired Michaelo, one day, when as usual they had set their hearts upon some little beggar.

“No, indeed! we were very happy, because we had then known no other way of living.”

“And so are these boys—and they had much better remain as they are, until, by their own exertions, they have raised themselves above their present condition. You must try to persuade them to follow your

example, and then I will see what we can do to help them."

Carlo and Pietro were now unceasing in their endeavours to persuade the children to be industrious and orderly. They told them of their own struggles, and of their great success. But alas! their bad habits were too deeply rooted.

"Ah!" answered a little Lazzaroni, "you have been fortunate enough, but it is not all who are so. Besides, it is never worth while to take so much trouble. If I were rich I couldn't be more happy than I am now."

Michaelo never failed to be present at the Festival of Saint Januarius, when the pretended liquefaction of blood took place. It was on one of these occasions that he had

taken his children to the church of the Santa Chiaja. The church was very hot, and Pietro and Carlo asked their father's permission to take a walk. He readily consented, and they ran merrily along the sea-shore, amusing themselves with watching the fishes, as they sported in their native element, or the sea-birds, as they fluttered overhead. At length, tired of their active exercise, they threw themselves on the soft turf, whilst the variegated lizards jumped fearlessly about them, or stopped to look at them with their dark clear eyes. Sometimes, some yellow and black land tortoises would waddle cautiously past them. Cattle were grazing on the sides of the mountains, and numerous goats clambering about the heights.

But the sight of some fishermen who were emptying their nets, enticed the children to leave their soft couch. They were highly delighted with the variety of beautiful fish that had been taken ; but amongst them was rather an unwelcome visitor—a saw-fish, which had done great injury to the net with his sharp saw. He paid dearly, however, for his temerity.

So interested were the children in what was going on, that they did not perceive the approach of a storm. Neapolitan storms are no trifles. Soon they heard fearful peals of thunder, and the earth and sky were veiled in obscurity.

“Surely the boys will take shelter somewhere,” said Michaelo, as, endeavouring to

calm the frightened Anna, he placed himself at the window, to watch in the direction which they had taken. The lightning was so vivid, that it illuminated the whole apartment, and the thunder, re-echoed as it was by the hollow ground of this volcanic region, resembled the roll of innumerable artillery. The effect of the lightning on the sea was truly magnificent. When the forked flashes, like fiery arrows from heaven, shot along the water, till they seemed to be turned in its depth, the whole surface seemed to rise in one sheet of flame. Then again the thunder crashed, and apparently shook the earth to its very centre.

Michaelo looked anxiously up the deserted street, for men and beasts had all sought

shelter. Suddenly, he saw two red spots at the farther end of the quay, which could be nothing else but Lazzaroni caps. His heart beat anxiously. "If the boys do not run for it, they will certainly be lost," thought he. And he strained his eyes, and beckoned them to hasten, though they were too far off to see him.

But they were running fast. Pietro, who was stronger than Carlo, had thrown his arm round his brother, to help him forward. But when the awful flashes came, and the rolling immediately followed, they both stood still, frightened and trembling ; till again all was hushed for a moment, and again they rushed forward.

They were now so near, that their father



could discern their flushed faces, and they could see him and Anna at the window. Suddenly, a stream of lightning flashed across the heavens, and sounds were heard as if a ball of fire had fallen. The earth groaned. What could be the matter? The anxious watchers, blinded for the moment, had turned away their faces from the window. When they next looked, the children lay coiled up upon the ground. Alas! could it be that Michaelo's worst fears had been realized? Anna thought that he too had been struck by the lightning, for he had fallen down, and lay motionless upon the floor. She called loudly for help, and he was soon laid upon a bed, and every means used to restore him.

When, at length, he opened his eyes, be-

hold ! the two little Lazzaroni had entered the room. They were very pale, not from any injury, but simply from the fright at seeing their father in such a state ; for they thought he was dead.

It seems, that in hopes of escaping the lightning, they had thrown themselves upon the ground. In their alarm they repeated Ave-Marias, or prayers to the Virgin, for they had never been taught that it is God alone who can protect us from harm ; and after their happy escape, instead of thanking Him for their safety, Michaelo expressed his gratitude by vowing offerings to the shrines of the Virgin and St. Januarius.

This happy family lived long together. At length, Pietro, having become a first-rate

musician, set out again upon his travels. He did not forget to visit the Savoyard, Louis, whom he found situated in a comfortable farm, and as devoted as ever to his *chère mère*. He now possessed cows, and sheep, and mules ; and he treated them all with the same kindness as he had shown to his marmotte. He had been a good son, and a blessing had rested upon him in all his undertakings.

Pietro heard nothing that was pleasing of Louise. She so disgraced her family and station, by her light behaviour, that she had been placed in a nunnery, where she had died.

Carlo showed no taste for an artist's life. He married Anna, and they both took care

of their dear father. Old Michaelo's great delight was to teach their children to play on the zufalino. The children were healthy, and so tall and stout, that by the time they were three years old, they could not creep into the pockets of the old cloak, which had sheltered the twins when they were six years of age.

It is almost needless to add, that the old cloak was ever regarded with affection by the family, and preserved as a sacred relic.

THE END.

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